



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

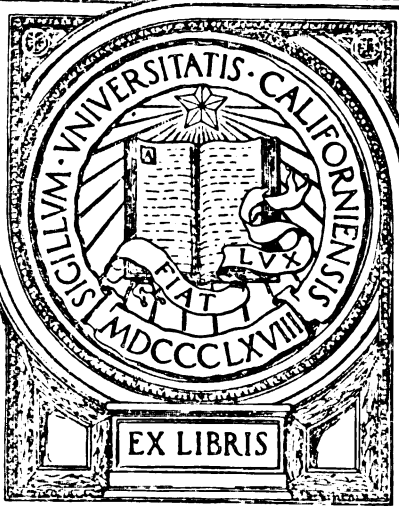
We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





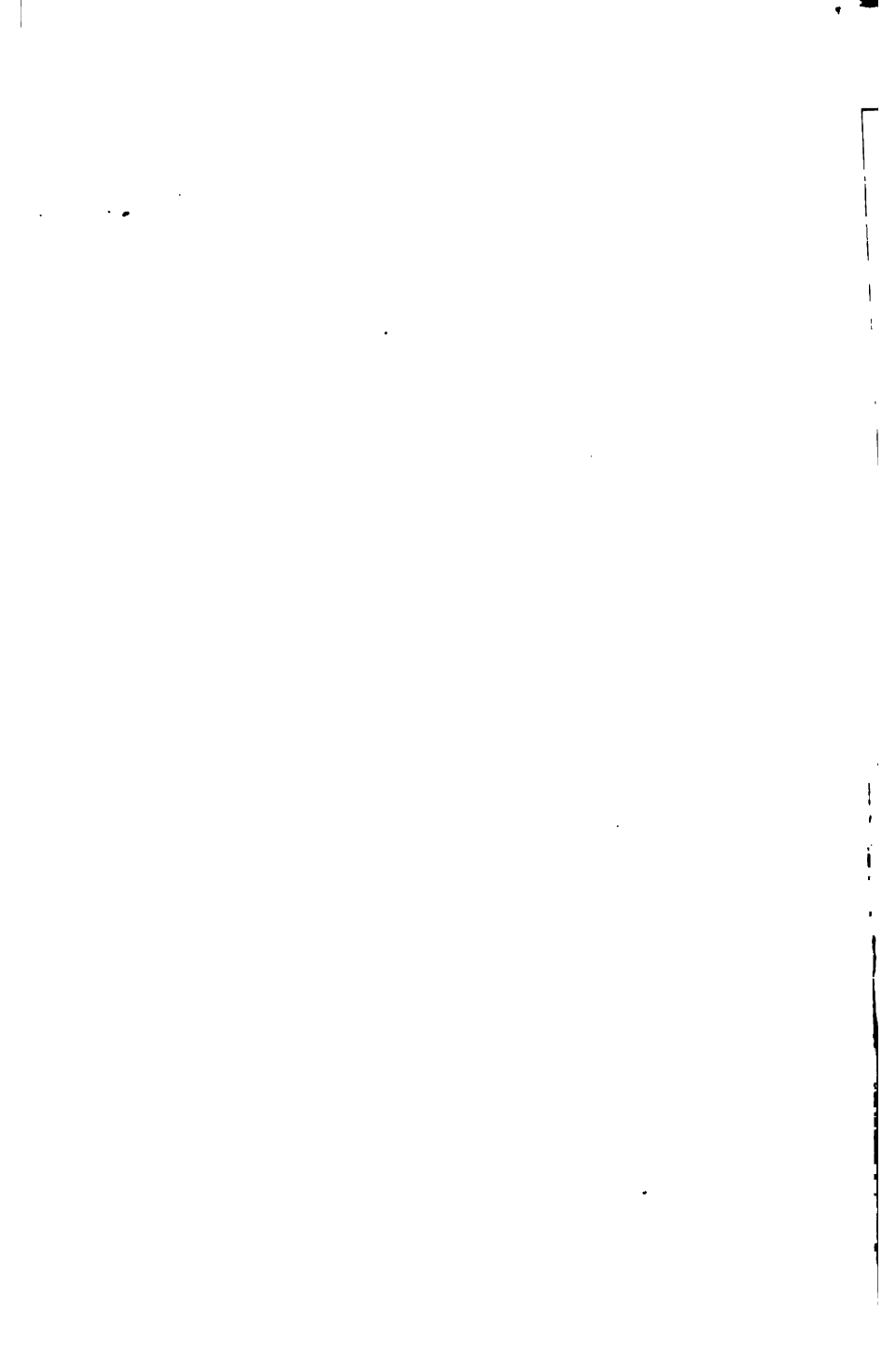
EX LIBRIS

U.C.









# GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

BY HERBERT A. GILES, LL.D.; T. W. RHYS  
DAVIDS, LL.D., Ph D.; OSKAR MANN; SIR  
A. C. LYALL, K.C.B., G.C.I.E.; D. MENANT;  
SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN, K.C.S.I.; FREDERIC  
HARRISON; E. DENISON ROSS; THE REV.  
M. GASTER, Ph.D.; THE REV. WASHINGTON  
GLADDEN, D.D., LL.D.; CARDINAL GIBBONS



NEW YORK AND LONDON  
HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS

1902



27  
MOFFITT

Copyright, 1900, 1901, by THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW PUBLISHING CO.

*All rights reserved.*

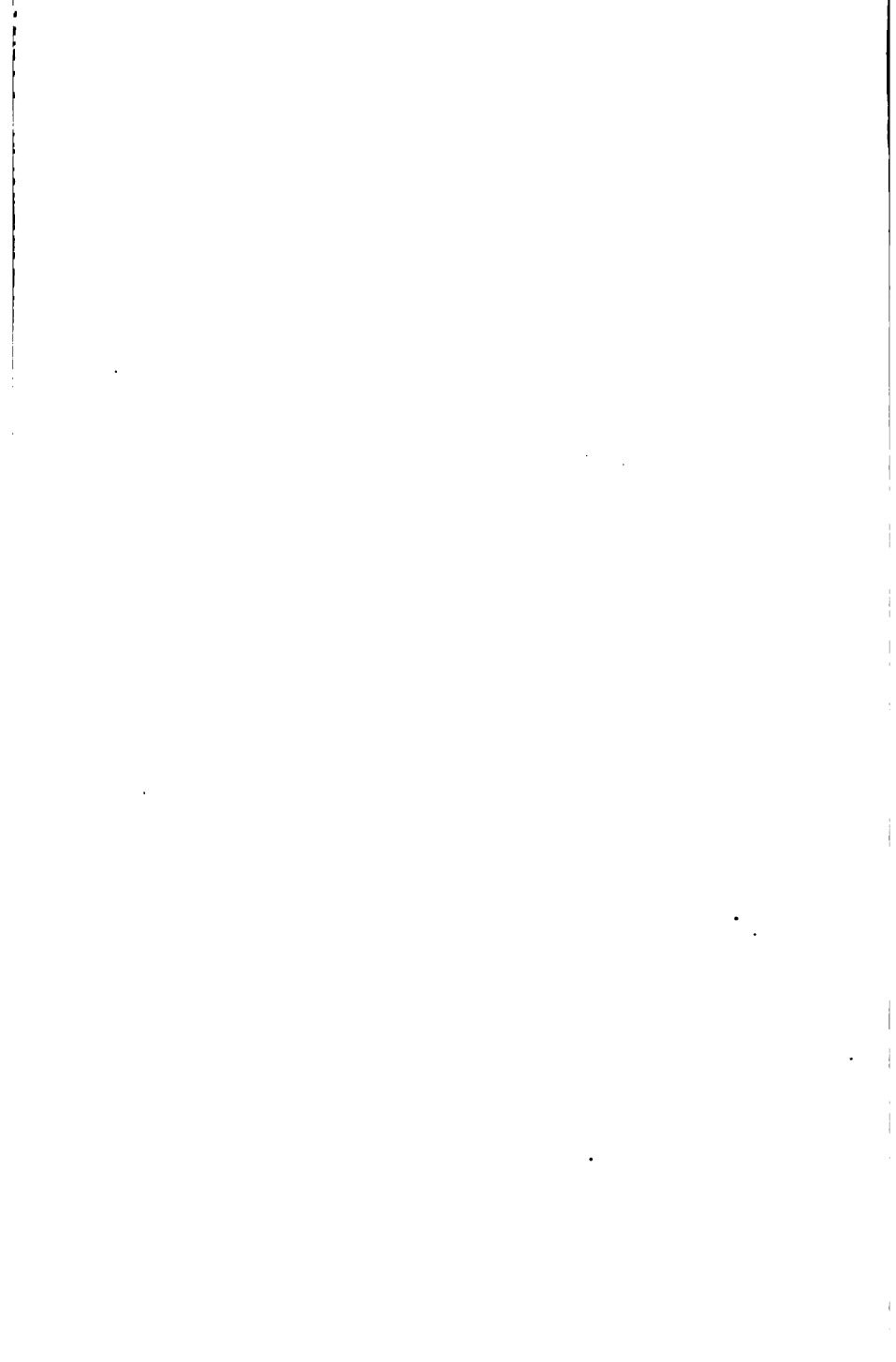
September, 1901.

# CONTENTS

	PAGE
CONFUCIANISM IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. BY HERBERT A. GILES, LL.D., PROFESSOR OF CHINESE IN CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY . . . . .	3
— BUDDHISM. BY T. W. RHYS DAVIDS, LL.D., PH.D., PROFESSOR OF PALI AND BUDDHIST LITERA- TURE IN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON . . . . .	33
MOHAMMEDANISM IN THE NINETEENTH CEN- TURY. BY OSKAR MANN, ORIENTALIST IN THE ROYAL LIBRARY, BERLIN . . . . .	53
. BRAHMINISM. BY SIR A. C. LYALL, K.C.B., G.C.I.E., MEMBER OF COUNCIL OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA . . . . .	81
- ZOROASTRIANISM AND THE PARSIS. BY D. ME- NANT, AUTHOR OF "HISTORY OF THE PARSIS" . . . . .	109
SIKHISM AND THE SIKHS. BY SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN, K.C.S.I. . . . .	139
/ POSITIVISM: ITS POSITION, AIMS, AND IDEALS. BY FREDERIC HARRISON . . . . .	167
BĀBISM. BY E. DENISON ROSS, PROFESSOR OF PER- SIAN IN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON . . . . .	189
JEWS AND JUDAISM IN THE NINETEENTH CEN- TURY. BY THE REV. M. GASTER, PH.D., CHIEF RABBI OF THE SEPHARDI COMMUNITIES OF ENG- LAND . . . . .	219
THE OUTLOOK FOR CHRISTIANITY. BY THE REV. WASHINGTON GLADDEN, D.D., LL.D. . . . .	253
CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY. BY HIS EMINENCE, CAR- DINAL GIBBONS . . . . .	281



**CONFUCIANISM IN THE NINE-  
TEENTH CENTURY**





## CONFUCIANISM IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

[BETWEEN 1662 and 1796 two of China's greatest emperors occupied the throne, with a short intervening reign, each of them for over sixty years. These one hundred and twenty years may be said to have been chiefly devoted to the extension of learning and the glorification of Confucianism. A prodigious amount of literature was produced under the direct patronage of these two monarchs. Besides dictionaries and encyclopædias of various kinds, a vast collection of commentaries upon the Confucian canon was published in 1675, filling no less than one hundred and twenty large volumes.] Everything, in fact, was done which, in the words of the Sacred Edict (1670), would tend to "get rid of heterodoxy and exalt the orthodox doctrine." Yet, during a considerable part of this period of Confucian revival, Roman Catholic missionaries were not only tolerated, but even honored. Such treatment, according to the Paraphrase of the Sacred Edict, was not for any value attached to the religion they

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

taught, which was stigmatized as unsound, but solely because they understood astronomy and mathematics, and were usefully employed in reforming the Chinese calendar.

In 1795 the great emperor Chien Lung, who had received Lord Macartney, abdicated, and three years later he died. He was succeeded by his fifteenth son, known to us as the Emperor Chia Ching, from whose accession may be dated the turning of the tide. The new ruler proved to be dissolute and worthless. In 1803 he was attacked while riding in a sedan-chair through the streets of Peking, and had a narrow escape. This was found to be the result of a family plot, and many of the imperial clansmen suffered for their real or alleged share in it. Ten years later a band of assassins, belonging to a well-known secret society, very nearly succeeded in murdering him in his own palace. The effect of these attempts was to develop the worst sides of his character; he became a mere sensualist, and even gave up the annual hunting expedition, which had always been associated with Manchu energy. Such a man was not likely to do much for the advancement of the great teaching which was founded upon such obligations as filial piety and duty towards one's neighbor. Some few valuable works, aiding to elucidate the Confucian canon, were published during his reign, but there was no more the same imperial stimulus manifesting itself under a variety of forms, such as welcome

## CONFUCIANISM

encouragement, pecuniary assistance, and, last but not least, the supply to deserving books of prefaces written with the vermilion pencil.

Confucianism was not for the moment exposed to any attacks. Roman Catholicism had been scotched by the formal expulsion of its missionaries under the edicts of 1718 and 1724, and Protestants had, so far, not entered upon the field. It was only in 1807 that the Rev. Dr. Morrison, of dictionary fame, went out to Canton; and within a year he retired for safety and the convenience of his work to Macao.

In 1820 the emperor known to us as Tao Kuang, second son of Chia Ching, succeeded to the throne. His courage had saved his father's life on the occasion of the attack on the palace in 1813, and he had been at once named heir apparent. He made a good beginning, and attempted to purify the court; but war with England, and rebellion in various parts of the empire, darkened his reign, and little progress was made. Gradually he learned to hate foreigners, and opposed their claims; and, borrowing a saying some centuries old, he declared that he was not going to allow another man "to snore alongside of his bed."

There was, at any rate, one great Confucianist who flourished during this period, and strove, both by his own works and by the patronage he extended to others, to keep alive the Confucian spirit. Under the friendly auspices of Yuan-Yuan (1764-1849) was produced, in a uniform edition, a col-



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

lection of more than one hundred and eighty separate treatises on the canon by scholars of the present dynasty. This work fills one hundred and two large volumes, and was intended to be a continuation of the similar collection published in 1675. Of course, every one who is a follower of Confucius may be called a Confucianist, but a man is specially so distinguished by the Chinese if he has contributed to the enormous mass of literature which helps in any way to explain, or sets forth in glowing color and attractive form, the holy teachings of the master.

The active opposition of Commissioner Lin (1785-1850) to the opium trade, which precipitated the war, was a direct outcome of his careful training in the Confucian school. The question of morality and the appeal to justice which he introduced into his famous letter to the queen, asking her to put a stop to the opium trade, were both based upon the ethics of Confucius. He not only professed his firm adherence to Confucianism, but exhibited in his every-day life a lofty conception of its ideals. He is the one representative of China, during this reign, to whom all foreigners would ungrudgingly accord the title of an honest man and a true patriot.

Tao Kuang was succeeded in 1851 by his fourth son, known to us as the Emperor Hsien Fêng. The reign of the latter is particularly associated with the Tai-ping rebellion, which shook the empire to its foundations, and, but for the presence of General Gordon, would probably have succeed-

## CONFUCIANISM

ed in putting an end to the Manchu-Tartar dynasty. In one of its aspects, it was a crusade against Confucianism, organized by a small band of men who had adopted a morbid and spurious Christianity. The large following which these leaders gathered around their banner knew nothing whatever of genuine Christianity, and very little of the doctrines offered them by the *soi-disant* Brother of Christ, afterwards known as the Heavenly King. As matters turned out, the shock to Confucianism was a mere nothing; for, although the Heavenly King succeeded in capturing some six hundred cities in sixteen out of the eighteen provinces, so soon as the rebellion was crushed (1864) Confucianism at once and completely regained the ground it can hardly be said to have lost. It suffered most, perhaps, through the destruction of many printing establishments containing the blocks of now priceless editions of valuable works on the classics. On the other hand, it can be shown that Confucianism is sometimes extremely sensitive. It had been enacted that the Sacred Edict, mentioned above, should be publicly read to the people on the 1st and 15th of each month, at every important centre all over the empire. This practice had been allowed to fall very much into desuetude at Canton. But about the year 1850 a number of educated Chinese, taking alarm at the open activity of Protestant missionaries, actually formed themselves into a society for reading and studying the Sacred Edict among themselves.

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

No one, of course, could maintain that the mere study of Confucian doctrines would suffice to turn out men of high character, unless the seed were sown in minds, as Confucius said, "fit for the reception of truth." As a counterpoise to Commissioner Lin, we may cite the case of Governor Yeh, whose action in the *Arrow* affair led to the bombardment and capture of Canton in 1857. When sent a prisoner to Calcutta, Yeh was asked why he never read, to pass the time. "All the books which are worth reading," he replied, "I already know by heart." He was alluding to the Confucian canon, his intimate acquaintance with which had placed him high on the list of candidates for the coveted third degree. Yet this man was, as an official, little more than a blood-thirsty tyrant. He is said to have put to death, first and last, no fewer than seventy thousand Tai-ping rebels. He had also become so unwieldy from self-indulgence that, although disguised for flight, he was unable to make the necessary effort to evade his pursuers.

In 1861 the emperor, who smoked opium to excess, died at Jehol, whither he had fled to escape from the English and French forces, then at the gates of Peking, and his son, Tung Chih, reigned in his stead. Coming to the throne as a mere child, the latter remained during his thirteen years of rule entirely under the guidance of the empress dowager, so that almost the first that was heard of him as an emperor was that he had fallen a victim to small-pox. He could not have learned much

## CONFUCIANISM

good about foreigners from his Confucian tutors, one of whom openly expressed his daily and nightly longing "to sleep on their skins." Meanwhile, with the ratification of the treaty of Tientsin, a shadow fell across the path of Confucianism. Since the days of the opium war and the partial opening of China, the missionary question had gradually entered upon the acute stage in which it may be said to have remained ever since, and it had become needful to insert in the new treaty a clause protecting not only the Christian religion and its exponents, but its converts. This was, and always has been, resented by Confucianists as withdrawing the converts from their allegiance; but it is difficult to say what other arrangement could have been made. Neither can it be fairly alleged that Protestant missionaries have ever abused their opportunities.

With the close of the Tai-ping rebellion, with a settled government, and with more prosperous times generally, the production of books showed marked signs of increase. Clearly printed editions of the classics and kindred works were issued from Wu-chang, the capital of Hupeh; on execrable paper it is true, but at a price which placed them easily within reach of the masses.

In 1872 Tsêng Kuo-fan died, at the comparatively early age of sixty-one. He had worn himself out in the service of the state, first as a successful military commander and afterwards as a successful administrator. He was, further, a suc-

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

cessful Confucianist, in the sense that his pure and incorrupt life was a happy exemplification of what Confucianism may lead to, if only its seed is dropped upon propitious soil. Though saturated with the principles and teachings of Confucianism, and undoubtedly hostile to foreigners, yet his memory is hardly more honored among his own countrymen than by those whom he felt it his duty to oppose. After the Tientsin massacre of 1870 he advocated a policy of peace with foreign nations, thereby incurring the odium of the more fanatical of the *literati*. At his death it was reported to the throne that, "when his wardrobe was examined to find some suitable garments for the last rites, nothing new could be discovered. Every article of dress had been worn many times; and this may be taken as an example of his rigid economy for himself and in all the expenditure of his family."

In 1875 another child-emperor, known to us as Kuang Hsu, was placed upon the throne by the empress dowager. This unfortunate youth has been severely battered by the shocks of doom. The story of the reform movement, and of his virtual deposition in September, 1898, is fresh in the minds of all. Since then we have heard rumors of abdication, and again of restoration. Had he remained in power, Confucianism would have been forced to reconsider its attitude to foreign standards of thought and education. But upon his suspension it was determined that the old ex-

## CONFUCIANISM

amination system, which had prevailed almost unaltered for nearly six centuries, with its roots extending back to the Christian era, should be restored in its integrity. The introduction of "new, depraved, and erroneous subjects," by which we must understand modern scientific teaching, was to be strictly prohibited under various pains and penalties. Thus, the occupation of the newly inaugurated Peking University was gone. For the time being, Confucianism is triumphant; and if the tablets of women are ever admitted to the Confucian temple, that of the empress dowager should be the first. Actuated, probably, by selfish motives, her anti-reform zeal has been invaluable to those who would maintain the paramountcy of Confucian education, with all its immediate influences upon the governing classes of the country.

A glance at a few questions actually set some few years ago at these public examinations will afford a good idea of the educational level to which Confucianism has raised the Chinese. The following were subjects for essays:

"(1.) To hold a middle course, without deviation, is as bad as holding an extreme.

"(2.) Of suspended bodies, none can exceed in brightness the sun and the moon.

"(3.) In the time of the Hsia dynasty (B. C. 2205-1766), the imperial drum was placed on feet; during the Shang dynasty (B. C. 1766-1122), it was supported on pillars; under the Chou dynasty (B. C. 1122-255), it was hung by a cord."

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

For a poem, the following theme was presented :

" The azure precipice was half concealed in a mass of rolling clouds."

In addition to essays and poems, several general papers of questions are set to the candidates. These comprise classical exegesis, history of ancient and mediæval China, ancient geography, etc., and are almost identical, *mutatis mutandis*, with papers on the languages and literatures of Greece and Rome, such as are set, for instance, at the annual examination of candidates for the Indian civil service. Here is a specimen of a classical question :

" Mao Chang in his edition of the Odes interprets ' The Guests at the Feast ' to mean that Duke Wu was upbraiding Prince Yu. Han Ying in his edition says that Duke Wu is here repenting of his fault of drunkenness. Which editor is to be followed?"

Here is a question on the competitive system :

" During the Tang dynasty (A. D. 618-907), personal appearance, fluency of speech, handwriting, learning, and decision were all taken into account at the examinations. How were the various merits of the candidates tested?"

It is the fashion to deride the Chinese curriculum, and to cry out for the introduction of " science," which would, no doubt, be very advantageous in many ways. At the same time, it must be confessed that the Chinese classics have had pre-

## CONFUCIANISM

cisely the effect attributed by Professor Jebb, in his lecture on "Humanism in Education," to the classics of Greece and Rome. Discarding the past tense for the present, his actual words apply with surprising force to the China of to-day:

" At the close of this century, the classics still hold a virtual monopoly, so far as literary studies are concerned, in the public schools and universities. And they have no cause to be ashamed of their record. The culture which they supply, while limited in the sphere of its operation, has long been an efficient and vital influence, not only in forming men of letters and learning, but in training men who afterwards gain distinction in public life and in various active careers."

Several noble specimens of Confucianists have disappeared during the present reign. Shên Pao-chêng (1819-79), who first distinguished himself against the Tai-ping rebels, was a stern Confucianist and, withal, a capable man of business. In 1867 he became director of the Foochow Arsenal, which he started with the aid of M. Prosper Giquel, in the face of much opposition, launching his first gunboat in 1869. Successful as an administrator, he gained a lasting name for probity, courage, and frugality, leaving behind him in material wealth literally no more than he brought with him into the world.

Another official of the same class was Ting Jih-chang (1823-82). He was connected with the arsenals at Soochow and Foochow. He was a commissioner for the settlement of cases arising



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

out of the Tientsin massacre. He became governor of Fuhkien, and in 1878 was sent to Foochow to arrange a very serious missionary difficulty in connection with some building operations. A Confucianist to the backbone, he earned the full respect of all foreigners, and when he withdrew into private life he carried with him a spotless reputation.

With such a father as Tsêng Kuo-fan, whose dying injunctions to his children compare favorably with Lord Chesterfield's advice to his son, it is hardly a matter for wonder that the Marquis Tsêng (1837-90), once ambassador to the Court of St. James, should have continued the best traditions of Confucianism. He promoted to his utmost the establishment of peaceful relations between China and foreign nations, and his death was a severe loss to Great Britain in particular.

Probity, like its opposite, seems to run in families. In the same year with the Marquis Tsêng died his uncle, Tsêng Kuo-chuan, younger brother of Tsêng Kuo-fan. He had risen to be Viceroy of the Two Kiang, and had consequently held the lives and fortunes of myriads of his countrymen in the palm of his hand. It is only necessary to add that at his death the people of Nanking went into public mourning, from which it may be inferred that, given the right material, Confucianism need be no hindrance to an upright and unblemished career.

One eminent Confucianist is still working for his cause, in a manner which compels the admira-

## CONFUCIANISM

tion of his opponents. Chang Chih-tung, Viceroy of the Two Hu, devotes much of the time which he can snatch from a busy life to the encouragement of Confucian learning. He has founded a college and a library for the benefit of poor students. He is a poor man himself, in spite of the high posts he has filled. He is master of a trenchant style, and has written against the opium habit and against the practice of cramping women's feet. He is hostile to foreigners and to Christianity, from the very natural desire to see his own countrymen and Confucianism paramount. Yet he is known to the general public as the one incorruptible viceroy.

[Manners and customs, convenient or inconvenient, if founded, as many of them are, upon the authority of the Confucian canon, remain fixed in the national life even more deeply than is found to be the case among Western peoples. The practice of employing a go-between in marriage, the illegality of marriages between persons of the same surname, the unwritten regulation that the axle-trees of all carts in the same district shall be of uniform length—these and many similar customs, fully in force at the present day, are based upon well-known passages to be found in different parts of the canon. Especially has the patriarchal system taken deep root, so deep, in fact, that, short of an entire upheaval, it is not easy to see how it can ever be eliminated from the social life of China, over which its domination

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

is complete. Since the days of Confucius, with filial piety as its foundation-stone, patriarchalism has prevailed over the empire, the unit of civilization being not the individual, but the family. The father, and after his death the mother, has absolute power over all the children, until the sons enter upon an official career, when they can be reached only with the consent of the emperor, and until the daughters pass by marriage under the *patria potestas* of another family. At eighteen or nineteen the sons marry, and bring their wives under the paternal roof. The eldest brother succeeds to the headship and responsibilities of the family, and the subordination of his younger brothers to him is only less marked than that of his children.

Altogether the patriarchal system has many advantages. It knits close the family ties. All earnings or income go to a common fund; and individuals, in days of failure and distress, are not left to their own resources. Labor is thereby provided with a defence against capital, and a steady equilibrium is maintained. It is, no doubt, a check to individual enterprise, and a direct encouragement to clannishness and its evils. On the other hand, it is equally an encouragement to morality and thrift. One thing is quite certain—either it is admirably adapted to the temper of the Chinese people or a long communion has adapted them to it.

The Confucian temple, mentioned above, de-

## CONFUCIANISM

serves particular notice, playing as it does an important part in what may be called, for the want of a better term, the state religion of China. Almost since the death of Confucius himself, certainly since the second century B. C., there appears to have been some sort of shrine commemorative of his name and teachings. At the present moment there must be what is called a Confucian temple, distinguishable by its red walls, in all cities above a certain rank throughout the empire. In those temples are ranged, in a particular order, a large number of tablets inscribed with the names of Confucius and of his disciples, of Mencius, and of various great men whose personal efforts have in past times contributed to keep alight the torch of Confucianism. Many tablets have, doubtless, slipped in which ought not to be there, and some names with indisputable claims have been excluded; but, altogether, the collection is fairly representative of the class intended, and may be regarded as the literary Valhalla of China. Twice a year, in spring and in autumn, offerings of food and wine are set out before these tablets. Early in the morning the local officials, in full dress, assemble at the temples; musicians play, the officials burn incense and prostrate themselves before the tablet of Confucius, and a troupe of trained performers go through certain set movements, after the style of the tragedy dances of ancient Greece. The whole ceremony is commemorative, not intercessory or propitiatory in

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

any sense, no form of prayer being used. Yet it has been scouted by many missionaries as worship, in the same way as the ceremonies commemorative of ancestors have been scouted, with more justification, as ancestral worship.

Every Chinese family possesses a shrine, be it only a shelf, where stand the wooden tablets of ancestors. Before these, incense is burned daily, with ceremonial prostrations. Twice a month, bowls of food are offered in addition. Once every year, at a certain date in spring, all respectable Chinamen make an effort to visit their ancestral burying-grounds. The spirit-path leading to the grave is swept; the tomb itself is carefully dusted; food and wine are offered up; and pieces of paper supposed to represent money are burned in large quantities. The food and wine are intended, in the opinion of the masses, for the spirits to eat and drink; and the fact that neither one nor the other is ever, to all appearances, touched, is explained by saying that the spirits consume only the flavor, leaving the grosser parts as they were. The money is supposed to pass through the agency of fire into the possession of the spirits for whom it is intended, and to be of actual use to them in their spiritual condition; but, to show that such superstitions have simply overlaid the earlier and purer element in the custom, it may be mentioned that coined money was not known until nearly three centuries after the death of Confucius. The same test may be applied equally

## CONFUCIANISM

with regard to geomancy, without the aid of which no site for a grave is ever finally chosen.

What Confucius thought about even a simple commemorative ceremonial is difficult to gather from his shadowy utterances, such subjects being uncongenial to him. It is recorded of him that "he made his oblations as though the dead were present," which need not be pressed to mean more than that his observance of the ceremonial was earnest rather than perfunctory. The general public, however, are inclined to interpret the words literally, and it is now customary to add a short prayer asking for the blessing of the departed upon all family undertakings. From the general spirit, however, of the teachings of Confucius, it seems clear that he would not have sanctioned superstitious rites. Offerings of food and wine, as may be seen from the Odes, were presented to departed spirits long before his time; and, at the utmost, he would be merely approving an already established system. The offerings themselves were probably regarded by him much as we regard offerings of wreaths and flowers at the tombs of departed relatives or heroes, scarcely as an appeal to the physical senses of the dead.

The learned Jesuits of the seventeenth century, headed by Ricci, declared the ancestral worship of the Chinese to be nothing more than a civil rite, and in no way incompatible with the profession of the Christian faith; and had this declaration been allowed to stand, the probability is that the Catholic

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

religion would now be the religion of China. The Jesuits were opposed, however, by the ignorant Dominicans; and, the question being referred to the pope, it was decided in favor of the latter. A great opportunity was thus missed. Some Protestant missionaries have been inclined to extend a degree of toleration to ancestral worship. Others have gone so far as to make it a rule to refuse baptism to responsible adults unless the ancestral tablets have been previously handed over. The importance of this cult at the present day may be gauged by an imperial edict, in which Li Hung Chang is instructed to desecrate and destroy the ancestral tombs of the fugitive reformer, Kang Yu-wei.

Many learned Chinese have labored to show that the Three Teachings—meaning Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism—are in reality at one. Confucianism is now completely tolerant of the other two. Without public temples, and without a priesthood, it exists by virtue of its influence alone, while the teachings of the Buddhist and Taoist are amply supported by all the instrumental details which so much commend a religion to the masses. An important compromise has been affected, to which this happy tolerance is due. On every Buddhist and Taoist altar there stands, practically out of sight, hidden among candlesticks, vases of flowers, and incense-burners, a small tablet, recording more by its presence than by its inscription, which is about the equivalent

## CONFUCIANISM

of "God save the Queen," as something independent of all religious bias, political allegiance to his Majesty the Emperor. Confucianism asks for no more; it will not even permit any effigy or likeness of Confucius to be set up in any such place of worship. The exhibition of this tablet offers a fair comparison with the exhibition of the royal arms once so frequently seen on the tower arches of churches, but not now regarded as a necessary item in church decoration. Christian missionaries have not seen their way to the same compromise. They have usually shown themselves unduly sanguine as to some imaginary canker eating out the heart of Confucianism. In 1861 Dr. Legge wrote of Confucius as follows: "His influence has been wonderful, but it will henceforth wane. My opinion is, that the faith of the nation in him will speedily and extensively pass away." Forty years have passed since these words were penned, yet the hold of his wonderful influence seems to-day as strong as ever. And this in spite of the fact that, as has been shown above, little or nothing has been done by the emperors of the nineteenth century to stimulate zeal in the cause.

Those missionaries have done well who have recognized the depth and strength of this influence. At the missionary conference in 1877, Dr. Edkins used these words:

"Confucianism is the citadel of the enemy, raising its battlements high into the clouds and manned by multitudes



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

who are animated by a belief in their superiority and their invincible strength. The taking of this fortress is the conclusion of the war."

The late Dr. Carstairs Douglas, a high authority, also said that he thought

"Confucianism a far greater enemy to Christianity than Buddhism or Taoism, just as Mohammedanism in India and Africa is a greater enemy than heathenism; in each case for the same reason, because of the large amount of truth it contained. Missionaries ought to study Confucianism carefully, and thankfully use all that is good in it, pointing out its great deficiencies and wisely correcting its errors."

The late Dr. Faber reduced the chief of these errors to twenty-four in number, exception to some of which might possibly be taken by differently constituted minds—e. g., "the assertion that certain musical melodies influence the morals of the people is absurd."

In 1877 Dr. Legge stated that the impression left on him by Confucianism was as follows:

"With very much that is good in it, it still is rather humdrum and inadequate to the requirements of our humanity, a bed shorter than that upon which a man can stretch himself, and a covering narrower than that in which he can wrap himself."

The Rev. A. Smith, author of *Chinese Characteristics*, says:

"It is acknowledged that there is in Confucianism much that is excellent concerning the relations of man, and many points in which the doctrines of Christian revelation are almost echoed."

## CONFUCIANISM

If such be the case, it would seem that the sooner missionaries devote themselves to a close study of Confucian doctrines, the better. This view prevails now much more widely than a few years ago. In the preface to his *Les Quatre Livres*, 1895, Père Couvreur, S. J., declares that:

*" L'étude de la littérature est particulièrement recommandée aux missionnaires, pour attirer les infidèles et les préparer à recevoir les enseignements chrétiens."*

Mr. Teitaro Suzuki has recently given similar testimony, without reference to Christianity:

" In Confucius and his doctrine are solidly crystallized the essence and the ideal of the Chinese people. When we understand Confucius, we understand the Chinese."

It is difficult, however, to see what real fusion can be brought about of Christianity with Confucianism. We are confronted, on the threshold of the latter, by the dogma that man is born good, and that his lapse into evil is wholly due to his environment. Here Christianity would find a compromise impossible. It has scarcely the accommodating breadth of Buddhism, which established itself in Japan in the sixth century A. D., not by denouncing the false gods of the Japanese, but by promptly canonizing all the Shinto ancestor-gods as Bôdhisatvas, second only to Buddha himself. But it might be possible to take a hint from Pope Gregory, who in A. D. 601 addressed a letter to the Abbot Mellitus, then starting for

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

England, pointing out that the temples of the English ought not to be destroyed, but rather "converted from the worship of devils to the service of the true God, that the nation . . . may the more familiarly resort to the places to which they have been accustomed." The old sacrifices were also to be retained in form, "to the end that, while some gratifications are outwardly permitted them, they may the more easily consent to the inward consolations of the grace of God."

Dr. Legge wrote, in 1877:

"Christianity cannot be tacked on to any heathen religion as its complement, nor can it absorb any into itself without great changes in it and additions to it. Missionaries have not merely to reform, though it will be well for them to reform where and what they can; they have to revolutionize; and, as no revolution of a political kind can be effected without disturbance of existing conditions, so neither can a revolution of a people's religion be brought about without heat and excitement. Confucianism is not antagonistic to Christianity, as Buddhism and Brahmanism are. It is not atheistic like the former, nor pantheistic like the latter. It is, however, a system whose issues are bounded by earth and by time; and, though missionaries try to acknowledge what is good in it, and to use it as not abusing it, they cannot avoid sometimes seeming to pull down Confucius from his elevation. They cannot set forth the gospel as the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation, and exhort to the supreme love of God and of Christ, without deploring the want of any deep sense of sin, and of any glow of piety in the followers of the Chinese sage. Let them seek to go about their work everywhere—and I believe they can do so more easily in China than in other mission fields—in the spirit

## CONFUCIANISM

of Christ, without striving or crying, with meekness and lowliness of heart. Let no one think any labor too great to make himself familiar with the Confucian books. So shall missionaries in China come fully to understand the work they have to do; and the more they avoid driving their carriages rudely over the master's grave, the more likely are they soon to see Jesus enthroned in his room in the hearts of the people."

The Rev. A. Smith would carry the crusade to extremes. Summing up his fascinating, though one-sided, volume above quoted, he says:

"The manifold needs of China we find, then, to be a single imperative need. It will be met permanently, completely, only by Christian civilization."

Forty years ago the "manifold needs" of Japan were pretty much what those of China are at the present day. All those needs, save one, have been supplied; and Japan now takes an important rank among the nations of the world. She has little or no religion, and does not seem to wish to have any more. Her ethical code, upon which the morals of her people are based, is a legacy from the days when every educated Japanese was a Confucianist. It is a practical, workaday code, setting forth a not unattainable ideal. It teaches virtue for virtue's own sake, and can no more be held responsible for the evils which flourish in China than Christianity can be held responsible for the evils which flourish in England. Yet this

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

is overlooked to a wide extent. Dr. Legge traced the lying habits of the Chinese directly to the example of Confucius himself, on the strength of three passages, one of which occurs in an admittedly spurious work. In the first, Confucius applauds the modesty of an officer, who, after boldly bringing up the rear on the occasion of a retreat, refused all praise for his gallant behavior, attributing his position rather to the slowness of his horse. In the second, an unwelcome visitor calling on Confucius, the master sent out to say he was sick, at the same time seizing his harpsichord and singing to it, "in order that Pei might hear him." Dr. Legge lays no stress on the last half of this story, though it is impossible to believe that its meaning can have escaped his notice altogether. Lastly, when Confucius was once taken prisoner by the rebels, he was released on condition of not proceeding to Wei. "Thither, notwithstanding, he continued his route," and when asked by a disciple whether it was right to violate his oath, he replied: "It was a forced oath. The spirits do not hear such."

It seems almost to be now recognized that the time has come for giving up frontal attacks upon Confucianism. Apart from ancestral worship and the dogma that man is born in righteousness, there is really very little to attack, and the onset would be better diverted in the direction of Buddhism and Taoism. The cardinal virtues which are most admired by Christians are fully inculcated

## CONFUCIANISM

in the Confucian canon, and the general practice of these is certainly up to the average standard exhibited by foreign nations. When the first Chinese ambassador to England, Kuo Sung-tao, was leaving England for home, he said plainly that while in material civilization we were far ahead of China, our national morality was nothing less than shocking. It must, indeed, seem strange to a Confucianist that, with all our boasted influences of Christianity, it should still be necessary, for instance, to organize a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the ill-treatment of children being quite unknown in China. Female infanticide has, indeed, been charged upon Confucianism, but the glaring absurdity of such a charge can be made manifest in a few words. It is possible actually to prove a negative, and show that extensive infanticide cannot be practised in China. Every Chinaman throughout the empire, with the very rarest exceptions, marries young. If his wife dies, he marries again; it is not thought proper for widows to remarry, though some do so. Many well-to-do Chinamen take concubines; some two, three, and even four. Therefore, unless there is an enormous disparity in the numbers of boys and girls born, infanticide must be reduced to very narrow limits. Yet, as late as May, 1897, Mrs. Isabella Bishop said, at a meeting of the Zenana Missionary Society, that "of eleven Bible-women whom she had seen at a meeting in China, there was not one that had not

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

put an end to at least five girl-babies." It is a work of supererogation to add that few China-women bear five children.

Buddhism, which may once have been a religion of pure and lofty conceptions, is now, as seen in China, nothing more than a collection of degrading superstitions, entirely beneath the notice of an educated Confucianist. Its tonsured priests are despised and ridiculed by the people, who openly speak of them as "bald-headed asses." Taoism, once a subtle system of philosophy, has been debased in like manner. It has borrowed some of the worst features of Buddhism, which has in turn appropriated several of the absurdities of Taoism. The two, after centuries of rivalry, have long since flourished peacefully side by side.

With all its merits, Confucianism is seriously wanting in attractiveness to the masses, who really know very little about it. It is a system for the philosopher in his study, not for the peasant at the plough-tail. It offers no consolations of any kind, save those to be derived from a consciousness of having done one's duty. The masses, who respect learning and authority above all things, accept Confucianism as the criterion of a perfect life. They daily perform the ceremonies of ancestral worship in all loyalty of heart, and then go off and satisfy other cravings by the practice of the rites and ceremonies of Buddhism and Taoism, which have so much more to offer by way of reward. Still, wherever Chinamen go they carry

## CONFUCIANISM

with them in their hearts the two leading features of Confucianism, the patriarchal system and ancestral worship.

During the past century, the sphere of Confucian influence has been enormously widened. Not to mention increase of population within the boundaries of China proper, there has been extension and consolidation in Turkestan, or the New Dominion, won by the victorious arms of Tso Tsung-tang in his campaigns of 1871-1878. Emigration, which was almost unknown in 1800, is in 1900 an every-day detail at the ports of southern China.

According to the favorite Chinese theory of "fulness and decay," it would only be expected that, after such a period of prosperity as was witnessed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the doctrine should suffer a temporary eclipse. Still, if this century has not been actually propitious to the peaceful development of Confucianism, opposition to Christianity has certainly proved a great stimulus, calling forth its worst features instead of its best—militant features of bigotry and fanaticism, of which Confucius, whose daily texts were reciprocity and forbearance, would have been the last to approve. Of this school, Chou Han, the fiend who excites villagers to murder peaceable missionaries, their wives and children, is the great living exemplar. Yet he, like the arch-fiend, should get his due. His own creed has often been attacked in a manner



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

the reverse of tactful, well calculated to goad even the mildest-mannered Confucianist to fury.

If Buddhism and Taoism could be displaced by Christianity, and Confucianism be recognized in its true sense as a pure cult of virtue, with commemorative ceremonies in honor of its founder and of family ancestors who have gone before, one great barrier between ourselves and the Chinese would be broken down forever.

HERBERT ALLEN GILES.

# **BUDDHISM**



## BUDDHISM

THE contrast between the rapidity with which Buddhism, in the early centuries of its history, spread over all adjoining lands, and its apparent inertness in these later centuries is very striking. We are only just beginning to gather the facts as to its original progress. And modern Buddhists are not in the habit of making any parade of their intentions, or even of their hopes. Any attempt, therefore, to explain this contrast, or to form a judgment as to whether it is likely, or not, to be permanent is beset with difficulty, and must be subject to revision.

It will not be without interest, however, to state shortly what is at present known on the matter, and to refer to some of those points which will be important, or at least suggestive, in any ultimate decision.

There are, of course, no statistics available as to the number of the adherents of the reforming movement in the early days of Buddhism. But the ground had been well prepared. Gotama, the Buddha, was careful in all his discourses to build on foundations already laid. He not only claimed

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

to be, but in fact was, for the most part, a teacher who took up and emphasized the best teaching of the past. On certain points only were his doctrines new. The most important and far-reaching of these points was his ignoring the then universally accepted theory of a soul; that is, of a vague and subtle, but real and material, entity supposed to reside during life within the body, and to fly out, at death, usually through a hole at the top of the head, to continue its existence, as a separate and conscious individual, elsewhere. We know for certain that this position, the refusal to use this hypothesis, was, among Indian thinkers, peculiar to Buddhism.

On other points we must still be content to reserve our judgment. The Buddha, for instance, is sometimes said to have abolished caste. But we are entirely unwarranted in supposing the system we now call the caste system to have existed in its present form when Buddha arose, in the sixth century before Christ, in the valley of the Ganges. On the contrary, the key-stone of the arch of the peculiarly Indian caste organization—the absolute supremacy of the Brahmins—had not yet been put in position, had not, in fact, been made ready. And in many other details the caste system did not yet exist. It was only in process of evolution. In face of these conditions, the Buddha's doctrine was necessarily twofold. Within his own order, over which alone he had complete control, he ignored completely and ab-

## BUDDHISM

solutely all advantages or disadvantages arising from birth, occupation, or social status, and swept away all barriers and disabilities arising from the arbitrary rules of mere ceremonial or social impurity. Now, we know there had existed orders before Gotama founded his. But their records are at present available only in so fragmentary a state that we do not yet know whether any of them had taken a similar step before.

On the other hand, outside his own order, the Buddha adopted, as regards what we now fairly call "questions of caste," the only course then open to any man of sense—that is to say, he strove to influence public opinion (on which such observances depend) by a constant inculcation of reasonable views. Thus, in the *Amagandha Sutta* it is laid down, in eloquent words, that defilement does not come from eating this or that, prepared or given by this or that person, but from folly in deed or word or thought. And here the very document itself, in giving the doctrine, gives it as the word of an Awakened One (a Buddha) of old. In other words, the Buddhist records put forward this view as having been enunciated long before, with the intended implication that it was common ground to the wise.

This is only one example out of many. The Buddhist doctrines that salvation from suffering, from mere quantitative existence indefinitely prolonged, depended on the choice of a right ideal; that goodness was a function of intelligence; that

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

the sacrifice of the heart was better than a sacrifice of bullocks; that the ideal of man was to be sought, not in birth or wealth or rank, but in wisdom and goodness; that the habitual practice of the rapture of deep reverie was a useful means of ethical training, of acquiring that intellectual insight on which self-culture depends; a great part of the theory of the origin of evil; a great part of the theory of Karma; the fundamental doctrine of the impermanency of all phenomena; the spirit of unquestioning toleration in all matters of religion and speculation—all these, and others besides, were pre-Buddhistic, and were widely held when Buddhism arose. Even the doctrine that salvation can be obtained in this life was pre-Buddhistic. The Buddha merely added that it could only be enjoyed in this life, that there was no salvation at all beyond the grave.

There was no organized church to attack. It was taken as granted, indeed, that the knowledge of the magic, the mystery, of sacrifice was confined to Brahmins, but the majority of the Brahmins, then as now, followed other pursuits. They were land-owners, officials, even traders. Many of them openly adopted, more of them were in favor of, the new school. And the new school itself was no organized body. No one, unless he actually became a member of Gotama's order, as a considerable number of Brahmins actually did, had to make any break in his life, had to lose any social consideration, by following, in whole or in part, the party of reform.

## BUDDHISM

The economic conditions were peculiarly favorable. And there was present a factor almost indispensable to any new movement of religious reform—the existence side by side of widely differing views of life. Just as our Reformation in Europe was largely due to the influence on Christian minds of the newly discovered pagan literature of Greece, so in India, in the sixth century before Christ, the Aryans were in contact with views of life fundamentally different from their own. It is a great mistake to imagine that the invading Aryans found only savages in the land. The Dravidian civilization was not inferior to, though it was, no doubt, in many respects, different from, that of the Aryans themselves. There was probably never a time in the history of the world, either before or since, when so large a proportion of all classes of the people over so extensive a country were possessed by so earnest a spirit of inquiry, of speculation, of interest in religious questions, by so impartial and deep a respect for all who posed as teachers of the truth. And there is no doubt about the enthusiasm of the new converts, though it was an enthusiasm of a peculiar kind. Almost all were filled with an overpowering reverence and love for their great teacher. Many had experienced, and would never forget, the bliss, the rapture of the moments of insight, of emancipation, of elevation when they realized, in their systematic practice of the reveries of Jhâna, the imperma-



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

nence of all phenomena. The related episodes reveal a calm confidence arising from the sense of self-mastery won, a keen intellectual pleasure in what seemed to them to be a final solution of the deepest problems of life, a longing sympathy with those blinded by folly and error. And the last of these feelings they were wont to cultivate especially by one of their systematic meditations.

Such are some of the considerations that help us to understand the original spread of Buddhism. Those who have found it difficult to reconcile the undoubted fact of that spread with their view of Buddhism as the apotheosis of annihilation, meaning thereby the annihilation of the soul, are wrong only in the latter half of their contention. As is now well known, Nirvana does not mean the annihilation of the soul—the Buddhists did not accept the hypothesis of a soul—but the dying out, in the heart, of the three fell fires of lust, ill-will, and delusion. A doctrine of salvation to be gained, and gained now, by self-mastery, by a gradual inward perfection, may have been very different from modern Western ideas, but was quite compatible with the necessary enthusiasm, and appealed strongly to the aspirations of the day.

What we know is that the success of the new doctrine was, in the first centuries, sufficiently marked. Its extent may be gauged by the account of the formal sending forth of missionaries at the close of Asoka's Council, held at Patna in the third century before Christ. They were sent

## BUDDHISM

to Sind, to Afghanistan, to Kashmir, to Tibet and Nepal, to the coasts of Burma, to the Dekkan, to Ceylon. In other words, missionaries were no longer needed in the vast extent of territory from the Indus to the Gulf of Bengal, from the Himalayas to the Godavari River. And in the following centuries Buddhism had spread west to the Oxus, north to Mongolia, east to China, Korea, and Japan, and south to Siam and to Java and to other islands of the far Southeastern Archipelago.

Then came the decline. Outside India, no further progress was made. In India itself the force of the new movement gradually fell away, until Buddhism, like Christianity, became almost unknown, even in the very land of its birth.

What were the reasons for this? Chiefly, no doubt, of two kinds—internal weakness and a notable increase in the power of opposing conditions. The very event which, in the eyes of the world, seemed to be the most striking proof of the success of the reforming party, the conversion and strenuous support of Asoka, the most powerful ruler India had had—indeed, the first real overlord over practically the whole of India proper—was only the beginning of the end. The adhesion of large numbers of only nominal converts produced weakness rather than strength. The day of compromise had come. Every relaxation of the old thorough-going position was heartily welcomed and widely supported by converts only half converted. The margin of difference between

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

the Buddhists and their most formidable opponents faded gradually, almost entirely, away. The soul-theory, step by step, regained the upper hand. Caste distinctions were, little by little, built up into a completely organized system. The social supremacy of the Brahmins by birth became accepted everywhere as an incontrovertible fact. But the flood of popular superstition which overwhelmed the Buddhist movement overwhelmed also the whole pantheon of the Vedic gods. Buddhism and Brahminism practically gave place to modern Hinduism.

We ought not, in fact, to be surprised that a theory which placed the ideal in self-conquest; regarded final salvation as obtainable in this world only, and only by self-culture; a view of life that ignored the "soul," and brought the very gods under the domain of law; a religion which aimed its keenest shafts against just those forms of belief in the supernatural that appeal most strongly alike to the hopes and the fears of the people; a philosophy based on experience, confining itself to going back, step by step, from effect to cause, and pouring scorn on speculations as to the ultimate origin, or end of things—we ought not to be surprised that such a system stumbled and fell. It might gain, by the powerful personality of its founders, by the first enthusiasm, the zeal and the intelligence of his followers, a certain measure of temporary success. But it fought against too many vested interests at once, it raised up too many enemies, it tried, in "pouring new wine into old

## B U D D H I S M

bottles," to retain too much of the ancient phraseology for lasting success. It was before its time. The end was inevitable. And the end was brought about, not by persecution, but by the gradual weakening of the theory itself, the gradual creeping back under new forms and new names of the more popular beliefs.

In almost the words the present writer ventured to use, nearly twenty years ago, "It would be, perhaps, hard to find, in the whole history of the world, a greater tragedy than that typified by the feast of Juggernaut. The number of deaths at the festival has doubtless been sometimes exaggerated, and I am quite aware that reasons can be given for the character of the carvings on the triumphal car of Vishnu. But it is acknowledged that the temple at Puri had once been Buddhist, that caste is ignored during the festival, and that the very name of the idol is really nothing but a misunderstood ancient epithet—the Pali word 'Jagan-natha' (Lord of the World)—of the great thinker and reformer of India. We know that deaths did, in fact, and up to very recent times, take place, and were supposed to secure a happy entrance of the 'soul' into realms of delight in heaven. When we call to mind how the frenzied multitudes, drunk with the luscious poison of delusions, from which the reformation they had rejected might have saved them, dragged on that sacred car, heavy and hideous with carvings of obscenity and cruelty—dragged it on in the very name of Jagan-natha, the forgotten teacher of self-control, of

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

enlightenment, and of universal love, while it creaked and crushed over the bodies of miserable suicides, the victims of once-exploded superstitions—it will help us to realize how heavy is the hand of the immeasurable past; how much more powerful than the voice of the prophets is the influence of congenial fancies and of inherited beliefs.”

And now? Is there any probability of the revival of Buddhism? Has it force enough, has it any force to stand up against the altered conditions of the world? Beaten back by the fire and sword of a fierce Mohammedanism from Khiva and Bokhara, from Afghanistan and Baluchistan, from Sind and from the Panjab, will it regain there the lost territory, and restore the beautiful monuments so ruthlessly destroyed? It was the same gentle hands that gave the *coup de grâce* to Buddhism in the valley of the Ganges. The great university of Nālandā still existed, as the chief if not the only centre of unsectarian religious life in India, when the Moslems came.

They murdered the teachers and burned the books, and, without any military necessity that is now perceptible, destroyed the buildings. Can Buddhism recover there the ground it had previously lost by its own failings, and rebuild the great university now buried in heaps of ruin and covered with jungle? Can it recover its lost influence in China and Japan, where it was for a short time the dominant faith, and is now despised, again through its own weakness, by the official and ruling classes who once professed

## BUDDHISM

it? Is there any probability of its once again sending out its missionaries into distant lands, and gaining over new regions to its strong gospel of self-victory by self-abnegation?

The answer, so far as it can be given at all, can only be given in the light of the history of the past. In so far as it shall be able to purify itself by an intelligent approximation, indeed, by a practical return, to the teaching of the master, there is hope for it. Its most powerful weapon, now as then, must always be the Four Truths, the Noble Path in which they culminate, the doctrine of Arahatsip to which that path leads up. It is by no means sure that Buddhists throughout the world have as yet fully and consciously reached this position. But some approach, at least, to it is being brought about by two causes especially. And these are both due, oddly enough, to European and American agency—they are the influence of Christian propagandists and of European and American scholars.

One result of the first has been, and especially in those countries where it has been most vigorously carried on, to compel the Buddhists to examine their grounds of belief, and, with that object, to study more carefully their ancient literature. We see, therefore, throughout the Buddhist world an enthusiasm reawakening for education, both primary and secondary, to be conducted on their own lines. Books in manuscript, on the time-honored palm-leaves, had been deemed enough when their position was not attacked. Now they are printing and cir-

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

culating their books, as the Christians do; they are founding schools for both sexes; they are establishing boards of education, even high schools and colleges; and their sacred books, no longer left only in the hands of student recluses, are printed and circulated at large. *Fas est et ab hoste doceri.*

On the other hand, the labors of European and American scholars are making accessible, also on this side, the ancient texts, and are even beginning to translate them into European languages, and to analyze and summarize their contents. Though the Buddhists do not in the least agree with us, whose aim is not controversial at all, but only historical, they are beginning not only to make such use as suits them of our results, but to imitate our methods.

It may be desirable to specify, with regard to each country—for Buddhism is still an influence over widely separated portions of the globe, and the present position is different in each—how far such movements have gone. In Japan, split up as Buddhism is into many sects, of which Mr. Fujish Ma has given us so interesting an account,\* the very difference of opinion has led to one sect vying with the other in propagandist education. Several of them have even sent students over to Europe for the express purpose of learning Pali and Sanscrit—a most striking phenomenon of the time. And one or two of these students, thus trained in European

\* *Le Bouddhisme japonais ; doctrines et histoire des douze grandes sectes du Bouddhisme du Japon.* Paris, 1889

## B U D D H I S M

knowledge, notably the gentleman already referred to, and Mr. Bunyu Nanjio, and, last (not least), Mr. Takakusu, have, by their published works, added not only to native, but to European knowledge. A very excellently conducted periodical, now called *The Orient*, gives also able expression, in English, to the general Buddhist view of things, and publishes English versions of the texts held in most repute. In the face of the increased importance which recent events have given to the military caste in Japan, a caste devoted almost exclusively to the ancient paganism, the Shinto faith of their ancestors, this activity and zeal of the Buddhists is noteworthy.

In China, in this as in other respects, all is silent; or, if there be any movement, we know nothing of it. Buddhism there has always, in spite of a few intervals of royal favor, had a hard fight against Confucianism; and it lies at present, mostly from internal causes, under a cloud. But it still has a large following among the masses, and even, though they often prefer to conceal the fact, among the wealthier classes; and any revival of Chinese national feeling will have its effect also on the Buddhist communities.

In Siam, on the other hand, the Buddhist advance has the able and efficient support of the ruling family. In emulation, no doubt, and in some respects in imitation, of the Pali Text Society, the work of European scholars, the Buddhist scholars of Siam—for scholarship has never died out there—have brought out, at the expense and



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

under the patronage of their present enlightened monarch, and under the superintendence of his brother, the distinguished scholar and member of the Buddhist Order, Prince Vajira-nana, a most admirable and now nearly complete edition of the whole of their ancient sacred books, and are beginning, under the same auspices, an edition of the numerous commentaries—all in Pali, of course, but printed, not in the Pali, but in the ordinary Siamese, characters.

In Ceylon, the Buddhists—not without help, be it noted, from American sympathizers—have started new schools, both for boys and girls. They have also inaugurated colleges for the higher education of the Buddhist clergy. And more than one of these colleges, notably in Colombo, under the able superintendence of the distinguished scholar Sumangala Maha Nayaka, who is an Honorary Member of the Royal Asiatic Society of England, have produced scholars and organizers who are fully awake to all the necessities of the times. There is a paper there, too, *The Buddhist*, which does for Ceylon what *The Orient* does for Japan; and a native paper, written in Singalese, the *Sava Sanda Rasa*, which is even more important, and has a large and influential circulation.

In India, an organization has been set on foot in Calcutta for the propagation of Buddhist opinion. This owed its commencement to the agency of Ceylon Buddhists, and is at present very ably presided over by a Ceylonese well known in Europe

## B U D D H I S M

and America, Mr. Dharmapala. But it has received the adhesion and support of influential natives of India. Some of them contribute articles to its journal, the *Journal of the Maha Bodhi Society*, and others have gone to Ceylon to study Buddhism there. A principal object of the association, to obtain possession of the ancient Maha Bodhi temple, erected on the site of the spot where the Buddha obtained Nirvana, has not at present been successful. But the organization is full of life and aspiration, and it seems by no means improbable that it will succeed in spreading to a considerable extent once more in India the faith of the greatest teacher and thinker that India has yet produced.

In Burma Buddhism is at present quieter. Perhaps it is that the Buddhists there feel less than elsewhere the pressure of opposing forces. As Mr. Fielding has shown in that enchanting volume, *The Soul of a People*, Buddhism is in Burma a power, and a power on the whole for good, influencing the lives of the people from the cradle to the grave. And though quiet, it is not quiescent. The press issues an increasing number of Buddhist texts, old and new. And though the Buddhist peasantry have not yet, from financial causes, succeeded in publishing the whole of the authoritative texts of their religion, the texts they do publish have a wide circulation and are held in high honor by the people.

There is yet another point which it would be

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

blindness to omit in any estimate of the position of Buddhism as a living force—it is not at all improbable that it may turn out, eventually, to be the most important point of all—the quiet but irresistible way in which Buddhism is making its influence felt, quite apart from any religious propaganda, in the thought of the West. What Schopenhauer said has often been quoted, but will bear quoting again: “If I am to take the results of my own philosophy as the standard of truth, I should be obliged to concede to Buddhism the pre-eminence over the rest. In any case, it must be a satisfaction to me to find my teaching in such agreement with a religion professed by the majority of men.” This would be neither the place nor the time to undertake any discussion of this utterance. It is enough to point out that Schopenhauer is, in all probability, the most influential philosopher among those now followed in Germany; and that the influence of Germany, at all events in intellectual matters, is at present, if not indeed in the ascendant, at least exceedingly powerful. It is not probable that any considerable number of people, either in Europe or America, will ever range themselves openly on the side of Buddhism as a profession of faith. But it cannot be denied that there are certain points in the Buddhist view of life that are likely to influence, and to influence widely, with increasing intensity, the views of life, of philosophy, of ethics, as held now in the West. And not only the view of life, the

## BUDDHISM

method also, the system of self-training in ethical culture, has certain points which the practical Western mind is not likely, when it comes to know it, to ignore. The present results have been brought about by the knowledge of Buddhism professed by a few isolated students. It is only when the texts have been properly edited, fully translated, so studied and summarized that they have been made accessible to every one interested in questions of philosophy and ethics, that the full power of such truth as there is in the Buddhist theory will be felt.

It cannot be considered as at all improbable that the twentieth century will see a movement of ideas not unlike in importance to that resulting from the discovery of Greek thought at the time of the Renaissance, and due, like it, to the meeting together in men's minds of two fundamentally different interpretations of the deepest problems man has to face.

T. W. RHYS DAVIDS.

D



**MOHAMMEDANISM IN THE  
NINETEENTH CENTURY**



## MOHAMMEDANISM IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

ON the day of intercession for missions in the year 1873 Professor Max Müller advanced the theory that the six great religions of the world are divisible into missionary and non-missionary religions. Under the first head he places Buddhism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism; while Brahminism, Zoroastrianism, and Judaism belong to the latter class. He adds that the characteristic feature of missionary religions is that in these "the spreading of the truth and the conversion of unbelievers are raised to the rank of a sacred duty by the founder. . . . It is the spirit of truth in the hearts of believers which cannot rest unless it manifests itself in thought, word, and deed, which is not satisfied till it has carried its message to every human soul, till what it believes to be the truth is accepted as the truth by all members of the human family."

It is from the zeal for propagation in a religion that we are able to judge of its vitality. If, for example, we wish to gain a clear idea of the vitality



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

of Christianity, we must not direct our attention towards the intellectual centres of Christian countries, where materialism and hypercriticism often obscure the image of eternal religion, where indifference and skepticism seem to threaten the very existence of the faith, but we must look at the missionary work, in which, with youthful enthusiasm and sacred zeal, not the least valuable elements of the nations are active in the propagation of the faith, often at the sacrifice of their own lives.

The same is true also of Mohammedanism, in connection with which a striking activity in the spreading of its teaching is displayed. This fact is not sufficiently recognized, and it may, therefore, be of general interest to give some information as to the present condition of Mohammedanism, the number of its adherents, and the manner of its propagation. From the facts and figures adduced below we shall be enabled, at the same time, to form an opinion as to whether Pan-Islamism constitutes a danger to Oriental civilization, as is asserted by some authorities on Eastern matters. Furthermore, the approaching close of the century presents a fitting occasion for a retrospective glance at the religious and intellectual movements of the past hundred years. In the nineteenth century, especially, technical knowledge has made vast progress, and the ever-increasing energies at work in the life of civilized races naturally sought before long to bring other spheres under their influence. It was in the nineteenth century that modern civil-

## MOHAMMEDANISM

ization first came actually face to face with Mohammedanism, which forms, as it were, a barrier between Western culture and non-civilized peoples. Step by step, the influences of the West encroach upon the borders of the Mohammedan world, not, of course, without producing certain reactions. So it is that, in the nineteenth century, after a long interval, Mohammedanism again manifests expansive activity, and in a manner, indeed, which evokes our admiration.

I will begin by giving, by means of figures, an idea of the present condition of Mohammedanism in the different continents, compared with its proportions about one hundred years ago.\*

The status of Islam in America may be dismissed very briefly. On the whole continent of North and South America there live only about 49,500 Mohammedans, there being 20,500 in North and Central America, inclusive of the West Indies; the other 29,000 are in South America, where the British colony of Guiana alone contains 21,000 Mohammedans. These are exclusively workmen, the coolies imported from India and China. There is here as little question of the progress of Mohammedanism as of its retrogression; conversions to

\* For the years 1890-1897 especially good and critically sound materials are afforded by the excellent work of Dr. Jansen, *The Propagation of Mohammedanism* (*Die Verbreitung des Islams*), 1897. But it is, of course, difficult, if not impossible, to obtain reliable figures for earlier periods. Here their want must be supplied by a survey of the spread of Mohammedanism from a geographical point of view, as, for example, in the case of Africa.

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

Islamism do not take place at all, as the coolies live apart, and scarcely come into contact with Americans. They, moreover, generally return home when they have effected an improvement in their material position, and are replaced by other immigrants, who form hopes of large earnings in the foreign land. That the majority of these Mohammedans live in British Guiana is naturally accounted for by the relative facilities for the transport of coolies thither from British India.

Mohammedanism has as yet penetrated very little into Australia, although the insular connection of that continent with the Malay Archipelago, where Mohammedans predominate, will doubtless soon produce a more active propaganda of Mohammedanism there. We have to record in Australia, inclusive of Oceania, about 19,500 adherents of Islam, who chiefly consist, *as* in America, of Indian and Chinese merchants and coolies.

In the Middle Ages, Mohammedanism, as is well known, had overrun a large portion of southern Europe—Spain, Sicily, southern Italy, and the whole Balkan peninsula, speaking in the widest sense of the term; at the beginning of modern times, it was geographically confined to that peninsula, exclusive of the Tartar tribes inhabiting Russia, in number rather more than six millions, who remained behind after the great Mongolian invasions. At the present day the Balkan peninsula contains about 15,700,000 inhabitants, of

## MOHAMMEDANISM

whom 3,350,000 are Mohammedans, most of them living in Turkish territory.

But in Turkey itself a constant retrogression of Mohammedanism is to be observed. Here the religion of the Prophet encounters Christianity, and frequently succumbs, since the latter is usually accompanied by the superiority of Western culture. That this was not always the case is shown by the very interesting history of Mohammedan propaganda among the Christians of the Balkan peninsula, in Albania, Servia, and Bosnia, where, especially in the seventeenth century, in consequence of the negligence and apathy of the Christian clergy, Mohammedanism made surprising progress. Information on this matter may be found in the capital work by T. W. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam*.

The Society of English Mohammedans, founded in Liverpool by Mr. Quilliam, a description of which is given by John J. Pool (*Studies in Mohammedanism*), has attained the large number of two hundred members in the fifteen years of its existence. This absolutely isolated phenomenon cannot be seriously counted among the successes of Mohammedanism.

On the other hand, great progress has been made by Mohammedanism in this century in Asia and Africa, its ancient homes; less through the power of the sword than by means of untiring missionary work. It is a fact that, especially in Africa, this kind of peaceful progress is more often

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

the result of a "jihad," or religious war; but, in spite of this, it must not be forgotten that the real instrument of Mohammedan propaganda is no longer the sword, as in the first centuries of Islamism, but the teaching of the priests who succeed the soldiers, and who impart the faith to the masses of the people.

Almost the whole of the modern progressive movement of Mohammedanism in this century may be traced, directly or indirectly, to a puritanical sect, the so-called Wahhabis, whose founder, Abd-al-Wahhab, appeared in the first half of the eighteenth century in the province of Nejd, in the interior of Arabia, as the reformer of a then very corrupt Mohammedanism. Before long he and his successors had such a powerful following among the nomad tribes of Arabia that in the year 1803 they even gained possession of the two sacred cities, Mecca and Medina, and only about ten years ago was the Turkish government able to put an end to their political power. Like the Reformation of Luther in Germany, this movement was originally directed only against the abuse of the veneration of saints, against religious superstition and increasing luxury in worship, and therefore it aimed merely at a spiritual revival; it has, however, particularly since the destruction of its political importance, assisted a great deal in the exterior propagation of Mohammedanism. As little now could be effected by means of the sword for the renewal of the faith, so much the

## MOHAMMEDANISM

more fervently did its adherents labor as religious teachers within the sacred mosque itself.

On the occasion of the pilgrimage to Mecca, obligatory on all believers in the Koran, a certain Saiyid Ahmad, formerly a freebooter and bandit in India, became acquainted with the teaching of the Wahhabis; and, on his return home to India about 1820, with true Mohammedan fanaticism, he made it his life-work to spread the new doctrine—that is to say, pure Islamism.

In the year 1826 he preached a jihad against the Sikhs. In spite of great successes at first over the Sikhs and the Afghans, who also opposed him, he was finally defeated and put to death. The continuous progress of Mohammedanism in Hindostan is chiefly to be ascribed to his followers, who for a long time made the Indian city of Patna their headquarters. By careful calculations, based on the absolutely reliable publications of the Indian government on the *Census of India*, the following increase in Mohammedanism is to be recorded in different parts of the empire, in the period 1881-91: In the Madras Presidency, an increase from 1,933,571 to 2,250,386 persons; in the Bombay Presidency, an advance of nearly fourteen per cent. of the population; in Assam, an increase of nearly thirteen per cent.; in the Punjab, of ten per cent.; in Bengal and the Northwest Provinces, of from seven to eight per cent. The whole of British India, inclusive of the tributary states, contained, in the year 1881, 250,150,050 inhabitants,

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

of whom 49,952,704 were Mohammedans; and in the year 1891, 280,062,080 inhabitants, of whom 57,061,796 were Mohammedans.

The striking increase among the Mohammedans beyond the natural growth of population represents, according to Dr. Jansen's calculations, 0.406 per cent. for this period of ten years. From this it may further be calculated (as has been done by C. Y. O'Donnell, one of the English census officials) that, in about five hundred years, the whole of India will be an entirely Mohammedan country. This tremendous progress, in which, besides the above-mentioned Wahhabis, some other sects take an active part, notably the Faraizis ("followers of the divine precepts"), closely resembling the Wahhabis from a dogmatic point of view, is entirely the work of a peaceful proselytization. How much may be accomplished by these means is also shown by three million conversions to Mohammedanism, mentioned by the French writer De Lanessan for a period of ten years (about 1870-80).

It is easy to explain the fact that India, the land of strict caste, should be a fruitful soil for the intensely democratic religion of Islam. The most numerous are naturally the conversions of people of the lower castes. On this subject let us consult one of the best judges of the religious condition of India, T. W. Arnold, who says:

"The insults and contempts heaped upon the lower castes of Hindus by their co-religionists, and the impassable obstacles placed in the way of any member of these castes desir-

## MOHAMMEDANISM

ing to better his condition, show up in striking contrast the benefits of a religious system which has no outcasts, and gives free scope for the indulgence of any ambition. . . . The tyranny of caste tolerance is very oppressive. To give but one instance. In Travancore (west coast of India), certain of the lower castes may not come nearer than seventy-four paces to a Brahmin, and have to make a grunting noise as they pass along the road, in order to give warning of their approach." \*

We shall speak of these points again in another connection.

Proportionately great has been the increase of Mohammedanism in Burma, where, from 1881 to 1891, the number of Mohammedans increased from 168,881 to 210,049, representing nearly twenty-five per cent. of the population.

In the Malay Archipelago, also, the movement started by the Wahhabis in this century produced both an inward revival and an outward increase of Mohammedanism. The progress of the faith is there all the greater because the natives regard it as an opposition to the encroaching Occidental influences. The number of Mohammedans in the entire Malay Archipelago is reckoned at 31,042,000 out of 44,627,000 inhabitants. In the Chinese Empire, again, Islamism has made steady progress in this century. The number of resident Mohammedans (according to the estimate given in *The Statesman's Year-Book*) was computed at 30,000,000 in 1882, while in 1897 the figures are

\* Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam*, p. 220.



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

put at 32,000,000, which is considerably more than the proportional increase. One of the best judges of China, M. Vassilief, depicts the constant progress of Mohammedanism in the year 1866 in the following words: "Having entered the Celestial Empire by the same paths as Buddhism, Islamism will gradually succeed, as is not doubted by Chinese Mussulmans, in taking the place of the doctrine of Sakya-Muni."

In other Mohammedan parts of Asia, such as Asia Minor, Syria, Persia, etc., no progress of Mohammedanism is to be observed other than the natural increase in population, and this is quite natural in a country, like Persia for example, in which there are only a very small number of non-Mohammedans. In Russian Turkestan alone a slight decrease of Mohammedanism is to be noticed, which may chiefly be ascribed to the systematic Russification of those districts.

Mohammedanism is, however, making a triumphal progress at the present day through the "Dark Continent." It will be interesting to note some of the chief movements of Islamism, especially in west Africa. Almost all these movements may be traced to Wahhabite influence, whether it be that their moving spirit has come into contact with the teaching of these Puritans, or that newly founded orders have embraced Wahhabite doctrines in a new form, and preach these fanatically to the heathen.

In the first half of our century was founded the

## MOHAMMEDANISM

Mohammedan Fulah kingdom, in the neighborhood of the Gambia River, by Danfodio, which led to a great spread of Mohammedanism. Danfodio, himself a Fulah negro, had learned the Wahhabite doctrines on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and he preached the "pure faith" in his native land on his return. He succeeded, by means of his personal influence, first in converting the scattered Fulah tribes to his teaching, and next in uniting them in a powerful kingdom under his dominion. Above all, he understood how to rouse the religious zeal of his subjects, so that the Fulahs henceforth belonged to the most active among the Mohammedan missionaries. So, also, the founding of the city of Sokoto, now the centre of a flourishing Mohammedan kingdom, in a district still almost entirely heathen at the beginning of the century, was the work of Danfodio. So, again, in 1837, Adamana was founded by the Fulahs on the ruins of several heathen kingdoms. The Fulahs bore the victorious banner of Islam westward as far as the ocean; and, at the present day, four powerful Mohammedan kingdoms in Senegambia and the Soudan still bear witness to the missionary zeal of Danfodio. What the warlike Danfodio had outwardly subjugated was inwardly established by the priests, merchants, and teachers; they taught the newly won heathen to love and reverence the Mohammedan faith as a higher state of well-being.

Even in districts where Christian missions seem to have gained a firm footing, Mohammedanism

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

obtains an increasing number of followers. Thus, in the beginning of the year 1870, Islamism was entirely unknown in Sierra Leone and Lagos, the two chief English settlements, while now about a third of the entire population profess the religion of Mohammedanism.

The chief share in these almost unexampled missionary successes is due to individual religious associations, or brotherhoods, which aim in their rules at the propagation of Mohammedanism as well as at the inward purification of the religious life of the faithful. In the western part of north Africa, especial activity is shown by the Kadriyah, who had established themselves as early as the beginning of the sixteenth century in Timbuctoo, but who were first stirred to the zealous propagation of Mohammedanism by the movement which originated with the Wahhabis and was supported by Danfodio. Their missionary work bears an entirely peaceful character; it is founded merely upon personal example and good teaching, upon the natural influence of the teacher over the pupil, and upon the spreading of higher civilization.

Another religious order, the Tijaniyah, which also, on the whole, shows Wahhabite tendencies, engaged in the spreading of Mohammedanism with the sword in the fifties, under the leadership of a negro named Umāru'l-Haji, particularly in the region of the upper Niger and Senegal. But the real inward conversion only took place when,

## MOHAMMEDANISM

laying aside their swords, the victors began to be teachers of the subjugated heathen in the truest sense of the word; and, according to travellers' reports, this peaceful work is being carried on without interruption at the present day.

About the middle of this century a still later order, the Senussis, of Algerian origin, penetrated into northern Africa, and, notwithstanding their short existence, can boast of remarkable success. For example, the whole tribe of the Baele, settled on the east of Borku, have been won to the faith of Islam through the labors of the Senussis, while members of this brotherhood may be met with throughout Africa, and even far beyond the limits of the continent.

In order to give some idea of the immense spread of Mohammedanism in these regions, it suffices to mention that, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, with the exception of Timbuctoo, there was scarcely a Mohammedan settlement in the region of the Niger, while in the year 1897 from forty to fifty per cent. of the entire population were Mohammedans; and at the present day the Mohammedan sphere of influence reaches as far as the northern frontier of the French Congo State.

Approximately, the southern limit of Mohammedanism in 1800 may be taken at 12° N., while this limit has now advanced to about 8° N. As regards space, the spread of Mohammedanism in the course of the nineteenth century has not been so large in

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

the interior of Africa as in the western regions; but the absolute Mohammedanizing of the kingdoms of Kanem, Bagirmi, and Wadai is principally the work of this century. South of these three powerful kingdoms we find a large number of heathen negro tribes which afford the potentates of Wadai and Bagirmi welcome material for their slave raids.

In the eastern Soudan, in the early part of the nineteenth century, the conversion of the heathen to Mohammedanism had made but little progress, until, in the year 1835, a certain Muhammed Uthmanu'l-Amir Ghani entered these regions with the object of spreading the faith of Islam. He had come from Mecca, and after crossing the Red Sea had arrived at Dongola. From this point his journey was simply a triumphal progress. Everywhere the Nubians flocked to him as followers, and the regal pomp of his appearance made a powerful impression on the people, the report of his miracles also procuring him crowds of adherents. In Kordofan, where he remained for a considerable time, his missionary work among the heathen began. Many heathen tribes still inhabited this neighborhood and that of Sennaar, and among these Muhammed Uthman gained great successes through his preaching. It was at this time that Muhammed Ali, the founder of the present Egyptian dynasty, was endeavoring to gain possession of the eastern Soudan, and the Egyptian troops supported the peaceable

## MOHAMMEDANISM

missionary labors of the active brotherhoods with all the more energy, because by their means they hoped for a speedy pacification of the new regions. But the religious zeal once aroused in this manner was later to become dangerous to Egyptian rule. It is well known that, after a persistent agitation had shown itself for some time among the Mohammedan inhabitants of the Egyptian Soudan, suddenly, in the year 1881, a hitherto obscure fakir, Muhammed Ahmed, who had been leading the life of an ascetic on the island of Aba in the White Nile (13° 30' N.), proclaimed himself as the expected last prophet, the Mahdi ("the one guided by Allah"), who was chosen to purify Islamism from corruptions and spread its dominion over the whole world. Muhammed Ahmed was a Nubian from the province of Dongola. In his youth he worked at the trade of boat's carpenter near Sennaar. But he soon forsook his trade, attended a school in the neighborhood of Khartoum, and, after being initiated into the mysteries of the alphabet and the knowledge of the Koran, he established himself as an ascetic (fakir) on the White Nile, and had soon earned a reputation for great sanctity. It would take too long to give a detailed description here of the tremendous successes attained by this dauntless man with unexampled rapidity. Notwithstanding all the exertions of the English and Egyptian troops, they could not succeed in checking the rising, and on January 26, 1885, the Mahdi's predatory troops penetrated

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

into the long-besieged city of Khartoum, where a terrible slaughter began. The heroic defender of the city, Gordon Pasha, here met his death. Only in the year 1899 have the English troops succeeded in defeating the Khalifa Abdullah, the successor of the since deceased Mahdi, at the battle of Omdurman, and subsequently the news reached Europe from the Soudan that the Khalifa's army had been annihilated in another battle, and that Abdullah was among the slain. Thus at last has the death of the universally lamented Gordon been avenged, and the Mahdist movement finally quelled, as is hoped. Mighty as were the political disorders brought about by the rising of the Mahdi in the eastern Soudan, the progress of Mohammedanism here has been but small. Mahdism has scarcely spread southward beyond the old limit of the faith. The principal reason for this will probably be found in the fact that the perpetual wars of the Mahdi and his followers scarcely allowed of time for active propaganda, and the blood-thirsty character of the whole movement was not qualified for peaceful progress. It is true that we possess no unprejudiced testimony on the condition of Mohammedanism in those regions, as for the last twenty years the Soudan has been absolutely closed to all Europeans.

Still farther eastward, on the coast of the Indian Ocean, we come upon old Mohammedan territory — the Galla, Somalis, Zanzibaris, etc. In striking contrast to the religious fervor dis-

## MOHAMMEDANISM

played in the Mohammedanizing of west Africa, here there is scarcely any progress to be noted. Only among the inhabitants of Bondei and the Wadigo in German east Africa is an advance in Islamism reported. Notwithstanding, in the East the southern limit of Mohammedanism lies about 15° S. The cause of the want of progress of the Arabian religion may probably be found in the greater indolence of the east African negro tribes. It must also be remembered that this is the region in which the Arabs used to make their slave raids by preference, a circumstance which, as was seen above, has probably hindered the advance of Mohammedanism in the negro regions south of Wadai.

In round numbers, at the present day, the Dark Continent contains 80,000,000 of Mohammedans to about 200,000,000 of inhabitants. "It is hardly too much to say that one-half of the whole of Africa is already dominated by Islam, while, of the remaining half, one-quarter is leavened and another threatened by it."

These numbers speak for themselves. Mohammedanism is on the way to a total conquest of the Dark Continent. What a tremendous advance in civilization Mohammedanism brings to the negro! Let us hear the eloquent description of R. Bosworth Smith, one of the best judges of the African races: \*

\* *The Nineteenth Century*, p. 798 seq.



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

"The worst evils which prevailed at one time over the whole of Africa, and which are still to be found in many parts of it, and those, too, not far from the Gold Coast and from the English settlements—cannibalism and human sacrifice, and the burial of living infants—disappear at once and forever. Natives who have hitherto lived in a state of nakedness, or nearly so, begin to dress, and that neatly; natives who have never washed before begin to wash, and that frequently, for ablutions are commanded in the Sacred Law, and it is an ordinance which does not involve too severe a strain on their natural instincts. The tribal organization tends to give place to something which has a wider basis. In other words, tribes coalesce into nations, and, with the increase of energy and intelligence, nations into empires. Many such instances could be adduced from the history of the Soudan and the adjoining countries during the last hundred years. Elementary schools, like those described by Mungo Park a century ago, spring up, and even if they only teach their scholars to recite the Koran, they are worth something in themselves, and may be a step to much more. The well-built and neatly kept mosque, with its call to prayer repeated five times a day. . . . becomes the centre of the village, instead of the ghastly fetish or Juju house. The worship of one God, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, and compassionate, is an immeasurable advance upon anything which the native has been taught to worship before. The Arabic language, in which the Mussulman scriptures are always written, is a language of extraordinary copiousness and beauty; once learned, it becomes a *lingua franca* to the tribes of half the continent. . . . Manufactures and commerce spring up, not the mute trading or the elementary bartering of raw products which we know from Herodotus to have existed from the earliest times in Africa, nor the cowrie shells or gunpowder or tobacco or rum, but manufactures involving considerable skill and a commerce which is elaborately organized. . . . As regards the

## MOHAMMEDANISM

individual, it is admitted on all hands that Islam gives to its new negro converts an energy, a dignity, a self-reliance, and a self-respect which is all too rarely found in their pagan or their Christian fellow-countrymen."

And, if we inquire the manner in which Mohammedanism attains its almost unexampled successes, we are amazed at the simplicity of its methods. The propaganda takes place without attracting the attention of the world. Islam does not send forth its missionaries into heathen lands, like Christianity, with the prescribed task of inducing the largest number possible to embrace their own faith. The emissaries of Mohammedanism are the travellers, the merchants, who, while engaged in lucrative commercial transactions, implant their civilization and their faith. From the first, the population mistrusts the missionaries, sent *ad hoc* into their midst. They cannot comprehend the object of the coming of the stranger; the people have no confidence in him, and therefore oppose his undertakings. It is otherwise with the Mohammedan merchant; he does not seek to impose his religion upon the people, but wisely waits until they come to him to beg for enlightenment, for it is with nations as with children—what is given them they despise, while they eagerly desire what is apparently withheld from them.

At the same time, the *soi-disant* Mohammedan missionaries display far greater tact in the choice of their methods, as they manage to vary these according to the peculiarities of the nations with

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

whom they have to deal. They bring civilization to the African savages. They found cities and populate them with Mohammedan colonists, whom they transport from other districts; so, for instance, they took advantage of the great famine which threatened to depopulate the land of the Wanyikas on the Zanzibar coast to display Islamism as the religion of love and beneficent actions. They also occasionally win new followers to their faith by liberating them from the bonds of slavery. Thus, the founder of the Senussi order once purchased a whole caravan of slaves, chiefly natives of Wadai, and had them instructed individually in the faith of Islam. He then gave them their freedom and sent them back to their own country. These converts naturally gained crowds of new followers to the faith.

On the whole, Mohammedanism shows a marvellous adaptability. Where Mohammedans find an ancient civilization, as, for example, in China, they avoid either wounding or provoking those of a different belief, and manage to adapt religious ordinances to old customs; they include the old feasts in their calendar, and take an active share in all the doings of their fellow-citizens of a different faith. Their tact is also shown by small concessions in external arrangements. In China, for instance, they are careful not to build their mosques higher than the other temples, and therefore the mosques are not adorned with minarets in that country. By the power of their eloquence

## MOHAMMEDANISM

their preachers have brought it to pass that in China, even in government circles, Mohammedanism is regarded as uniting the best points of Confucianism and Buddhism. One of their chief methods of propaganda is the school, as has been remarked above. Here they educate future generations in their own views.

The main reason for the great successes of Mohammedanism, especially among the uncivilized heathen of Africa, consists in the great simplicity of the religion in question. "There is no God but God," and "Mohammed is the Prophet of God." The convert need only believe these two sentences, and he is at once a Mussulman. After learning this simple confession of faith, he then needs only to fulfil the following five practical duties: (1) Recital of the creed; (2) Observance of the five appointed times of prayer; (3) Payment of the legal alms; (4) Fasting during the month of Ramadhan; and (5) The pilgrimage to Mecca.

And every convert has equal rights with all other members of the great community. In regard to the faith there are no distinctions; for did not even the Nubian, Muhammed Ahmed, rise to be the Mahdi, the Messiah of the Mohammedans?

But not only externally, in the number of the faithful and in the magnitude of the territory under its influence, has Mohammedanism considerably increased, but it has undergone a kind of regenerating process in its inner life, at least in certain important localities, which promise to supply it with

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

new strength for the struggles of the coming century.

Mention has been made already of the strong influence produced by the reformatory movement of the Wahhabis upon the inner life of Mohammedanism. Almost innumerable are the recently founded brotherhoods at work in Mohammedan territory in the Wahhabite tradition, either by the power of word, example, or by the might of the sword, or even by the union of both, as shown by the example of the powerful Danfodio. And when anywhere, from whatever reasons, an insurrection takes place against the authority of the state, the movement always arises from ideas of reform, generally from a puritanical point of view. If the leaders of these movements have no such motives, and should they only be striving for personal power, they still cloak their ambitious ends with the pretext of holy zeal for the faith, as was done by the adventurer Rabah, the all-powerful ruler of Wadai from 1890 till his death in 1897. The reformer who preaches against luxury and externality of belief is always sure of gaining a hold on the masses. But that these reformatory ideas, which are springing up on every hand on Mohammedan territory, should really *produce* a revival of the religious life, is shown again by the increase of the many religious orders, which can be statistically proved.

Even among the usually skeptical Persians a movement full of true religious enthusiasm, the so-called Babism, has gained a large number of

## MOHAMMEDANISM

devoted followers. The tenets of Bab, the founder of this sect, who died as a martyr for his creed in the year 1850, are closely akin to the doctrines of Christianity. "All men are our brothers, therefore let us do good to all, as the sun shines upon good and evil alike." Only such an intensifying of the Mohammedan creed could have the effect of raising the inwardly degenerate Persians to the rank among the Mussulmans which is due to their exceptional mental gifts.

That which holy enthusiasm for religion is striving to effect from within is being brought into the life of Islamism from without. It was mentioned at the beginning of this article that the encounter between Mohammedanism and Western civilization could not fail to produce an effect upon the former. But the powers that had slumbered in Mohammedanism for so many years did not come to life merely in the form of a conscious reaction against foreign ideas. The many advantages of modern culture, the technical knowledge of our century, were too apparent to be denied by the more reasonable of the Mohammedans. They began to realize that, if they desired to oppose the West, it could only be done with the help of the weapons of Western civilization; that they must learn from the Frengis, the Europeans. One of the most enlightened Mussulmans of our century, Muhammed Ali, the founder of modern Egypt, deserves to be especially mentioned here. As Danfodio and the Mahdi strove to spread the holy

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

faith with fire and sword, so Muhammed Ali's reformatory activity in Egypt is of lasting value to the further development of enlightened Mohammedanism. These three men may indeed be taken as typical specimens of the different forms of activity shown by Islamism in the nineteenth century. Muhammed Ali came to Egypt as a simple Turkish captain, and by means of his remarkable gifts, his mental superiority, and utterly untiring energy, often indeed united with barbarity, he contrived in a few years to make himself master of the country, and finally to shake off the intolerable yoke of Turkey. He had learned to value the advantages of Western culture, and everywhere, in his government, in the organization of the army, in the care for commerce, in sanitary provisions, in the administration of justice, we see him earnest in introducing European ideas. It was he who, rightly appreciating the influence of the press on the people, started an Egyptian newspaper, the first in the Mohammedan Orient (1828). The recognition of the utility of European civilization has slowly but surely made its way, and it is worthy of notice that in most cases the Mussulman becomes no mere outward imitator of the Frengi, but manages to preserve his individuality, even while he takes the good as he finds it.

We see that there is a fermentation going on in Islam from one end to the other. Externally, as well as internally, Mohammedanism has made

## MOHAMMEDANISM

immense progress during the past century; we see how, perhaps with a presentiment of a conflict near at hand, it seeks to become acquainted with the benefits of modern culture; we see how in Africa mighty regions become tributary to it. It is possible that if, in the coming century, some gifted man succeeds in inspiring these tremendous masses of Mohammedans with *one* aim, we shall have a hard battle to fight. Let us hope that Western civilization and European politics will succeed in leading the powers active in Islam into peaceful paths, and fit them to take part in the one great aim of humanity—the spread of true civilization.

OSKAR MANN.





# **BRAHMINISM**



## BRAHMINISM

IN order to bring out clearly the point of view from which I shall approach this subject, I must begin by a few preliminary observations. We know that Christianity, the highest and purest faith in the world, has always been essentially a militant and missionary religion, pressing onward unceasingly to extend its doctrines and to make fresh proselytes. We know, also, that in the seventh century of our era another faith arose, even more intensely militant, more fiercely intent upon propagation than Christianity—the faith of Mohammed or Islam. By this rival faith Christianity was fiercely attacked, and was eventually driven out of Asia and northern Africa, leaving only a few obscure sects, like the Armenians and Nestorians, surviving in countries which had once been almost wholly Christian. All the western region of Asia was easily overrun and converted by the Mohammedans; but eastward of Persia the spread of their religion ceased to coincide with the spread of their dominion; they could conquer India, yet they could only convert it very partially. In peace and war, they are always

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

proselytizing; nevertheless, Islam makes little or no material progress throughout eastern Asia. A vast majority of the population inhabiting that side of the continent adhere to older beliefs, which differ profoundly from the creed of Islam.

The dividing line, the religious frontier between east and west Asia, runs, therefore, through India; for the two great religions of the East, Brahminism and Buddhism, are both of Indian origin; and it may be broadly affirmed that, while all the dominant religions of the world are derived from Asia, the whole eastern side of that continent, including Japan, has been profoundly and permanently affected by the teaching and traditions of an Indian ascetic, Sakya Muni, the Buddha. Yet, although Brahminism has exercised a vast influence over the beliefs and worships of Asia during many centuries, and still numbers, at the lowest calculation, more than two hundred million votaries, it is not a faith that can itself be traced back to an epoch or a founder; nor can any concise narrative be here attempted of its course, its changes, or general development. The utterances of certain semi-divine sages, the philosophic systems of some great thinkers and commentators, have authoritatively shaped the leading conceptions upon which the religion now rests; we know, also, that different ideas and rituals have been dominant at different periods, that there have been degradations and revivals, and that the doctrines and practices of north India have varied, and still

## BRAHMINISM

vary, from those of the south. But here it is impossible to attempt more than a sketch in outline of the general characteristics of Brahminism.

In the first place, it is neither militant nor aggressively missionary; it does not openly attempt to make proselytes, in the sense of persuading them or compelling them to come in. Secondly, it is not historic; it has sacred books, but no sacred history. And, thirdly, it has never been defined by formal creeds, nor has it ever accepted a single personal deity. The general character of Indian religion is that it is unlimited and comprehensive, up to the point of confusion; it is a boundless sea of divine beliefs and practices; it encourages the worship of innumerable gods by an infinite variety of rites; it permits every doctrine to be taught, every kind of mystery to be imagined, any sort of theory to be held as to the inner nature and visible operation of the divine power.

Now, at first sight, this is not unlike the old polytheism of Greece, Rome, and the pre-Christian world generally, with its multitude of divinities and multifarious ceremonials. There are passages in Augustine's *Civitas Dei*, describing the worship of the unconverted folk among whom he lived, the deification of every natural object and even of physical functions, that might have been written yesterday by a Christian bishop in India. But then, one might ask, why was not all this paganism swept out from among such an intellectual people as the Indians, as it was out of the

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

Western countries, by some superior and more highly organized faith? Undoubtedly, the permanent conditions and the course of events which contrive to stamp a particular form of religion upon any great people are complex and manifold; but into an analysis of these elements I cannot go. It is sufficient for my present purpose to point out that the two sheet-anchors of Brahminism are the institution of caste and the sacred books, both of which were unknown to European paganism. The effect of caste is to give all Hindu society a religious basis; and the sacred books provide Brahminism with a theology—that is, with a science or philosophy of religion. I believe I may say that the old polytheism of the Roman Empire had neither of these two things. According to Greek ideas, the business of framing laws for all departments of human life, of laying down rules of conduct, belonged to politics; while the philosophers of Greece and Rome were rationalists and teachers of morals, they seem to have regarded the popular superstitions with good-natured contempt. They conformed to public worship that they might avoid odium and accusations of impiety, but they gave it no help or countenance; and in philosophic discussions they treated the ordinary polytheism as unworthy the notice of serious men. They never, or very rarely, gave an inner meaning to myths and fables, or read the minds of the people through their fanciful beliefs.

## BRAHMINISM

But the Indian philosophy does not ignore or hold aloof from the religion of the masses; it underlies, supports, and interprets their polytheism. This may be accounted the key-stone of the fabric of Brahminism, which accepts and even encourages the rudest forms of idolatry, explaining everything by giving it a higher meaning. It treats all the worships as outward, visible signs of some spiritual truth, and is ready to show how each particular image or rite is the symbol of some aspect of universal divinity. The Hindus, like the pagans of antiquity, adore natural objects and forces—a mountain, a river, or an animal. The Brahmin holds all nature to be the vesture or cloak of indwelling, divine energy, which inspires everything that produces awe or passes man's understanding. Again, it is very common in India, as it was in Greece and Rome, to deify extraordinary men, and the Brahmin does not tell his disciples that this is absurd; he agrees that such persons must have been special embodiments of all-pervading divine power. In short, he accepts every variety of cult and objective worship as symbolical; it is merely the expression or emblem, suited to the common intelligence, of mysterious truths known to the philosophic theologian. In this manner, the gross idolatry of the people is defended, and connected with the loftier ideas. It is maintained that God is a pure spirit, but to make Him wholly impersonal is to place Him beyond the reach of ordinary human interest and



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

imagination; so it is well for the less advanced minds to be encouraged by forms and signs of His presence. All worship, it is said, is expressed through the senses symbolically. A temple or church is a visible mark of our belief that the divinity abides among us; an image is the mystical token of the indwelling spirit; while prayer and sacrifice are the preparatory training towards more intelligent devotion. What we can conceive in our minds we may well picture to our eyes; and, by this method, the innumerable shapes and sacred places of Hindu polytheism are consecrated and adopted into the higher theology. It is on this principle that all the innumerable signs and carved images of divinity are accounted for among the upper classes. Each form, and every detail of that form, they say, is the outer clothing of some idea or impression; pictures and sculpture represent some mode of the divine presence: although the high doctrine is that knowledge, not worship or ritual, is the true way that opens the door to the soul's complete emancipation.

Above and beyond the miscellaneous crowd of things and persons, living or inanimate, unseen or embodied, that are worshipped as possessed by divine power, we have the great deities of Brahminism, from whom all this divine power proceeds, and in whom the principal energies and the fundamental laws of nature are personified. Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva are the realistic abstractions of the understanding from objects of sense. They

## BRAHMINISM

denote creation, preservation, and destruction, the constant succession of birth and death throughout all existence, the process of destroying to produce, and of producing to destroy. Here we perceive that, as soon as we pass upward through the disorderly mass of ordinary paganism, we come upon polytheism backed by philosophy; we may scatter the irregular levies, and are confronted by the outworks of disciplined theology. The great Brahminic Trinity are adored with various rites and sacrifices; they have innumerable temples, images, and personified attributes. Yet to all the more intellectual worshippers, Vishnu and Siva represent the course and constitution of nature. And, if you inquire further about these things, you will learn that all phenomenal existence is a kind of illusion, to be gradually dissipated by the acquisition of knowledge; for the reality becomes intelligible only to those whose souls have been strengthened and clarified by long meditation, by ascetic exercises, by casting out all worldly thoughts and desires. To the eye of inner illumination, those who know God only by delusive appearances see no more than the shadow of divinity. And, conversely, to the empirical or naturalistic mind the whole religion is intelligible as a kind of reflection or mystical transformation of human experience, the vast shadow of the earth projected upon the sky.

But all Hindus worship directly the high gods of Brahminism. Brahma, having accomplished

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

once for all his work of creation, has retired into the background of the popular pantheon; he has very few temples or images. Vishnu and Siva divide the allegiance of devout and orthodox people. It is impossible here to give the diverse names or emblems under which they are worshipped; yet some mention must be made of the Sakhtis—that is, of the divine forces of preservation and destruction, especially the female principle of productiveness, as personified by goddesses, the mates or consorts of Vishnu and Siva. The worship of women plays a material part in all polytheistic systems; and the grosser forms have been caught up and transmuted into loftier conceptions of divine maternity. In Brahmanism, the lower rites are unclean and disreputable, though they become purified in the higher regions of ideas; and a curious likeness may be observed between the consorts of the great Hindu divinities and the emanations, or abstract personalities, of the Gnostic systems that prevailed in the first ages of Christianity. These emanations were arranged in pairs of male and female; and, indeed, it is obvious that human speculation can only attach form or function to divinity by drawing upon terrestrial analogies.

Thus, Vishnu and Siva, with their consorts, are the pinnacles of the visible Brahminic edifice; they are different manifestations of the Supreme Being; they represent among educated men separate systems of worship, which, again, are founded

## BRAHMINISM

on separate schools or opinions regarding the relations between God and man, and the proper ways and means of attaining to spiritual emancipation. For the whole purpose of the higher Brahminism is to find and show the path which leads upward, from the simple, unvarnished popular superstitions to the true and pure knowledge of the Supreme Being, by laying out a connection between the upper and lower aspects of religion. One of the cardinal points upon which the two systems differ is in regard to what are called the Avatars—the bodily appearance of the Deity upon earth.

Vishnu, according to those who belong to Vaishnava tradition, has several times descended upon earth, and has appeared in various forms. From the high spiritual point of view, this tradition may be interpreted as a devout belief which helps worshippers to realize, so to speak, the relations between divinity and humanity, which brings the Supreme Being within our limited powers of conception, establishes a bond of sympathy, and allows us to address to Him prayers and offerings. In fact, the dogma of Avatars is symbolical of the spiritual link and intercourse between God and man; it sanctions and gives meaning to a widespread popular tradition, that divinities sometimes come down and mingle with mortals and their affairs.

Siva, on the other hand, is never represented by an image, always by an emblem of his powers,

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

destructive or regenerative. He has no Avatars; and the high theologians of this school refuse to admit that the Deity assumes visible embodiment. They argue that, by assuming a man's body, He would become subject to the laws of mortality, to changes, imperfections, human passions, and the like, to birth and death—and this they hold to be impossible, and inconsistent with the divine nature. The Avatar, they say, is an illusion. They permit and encourage all the rites and worships of the people as making generally for devotion; but they maintain that the only true spiritual path to salvation, for the superior intelligences, is by ascetic practices, by meditation, by separation from all worldly thoughts and cares; so that the soul gradually obtains true communion with the Supreme Being, and becomes at last absorbed, like a drop in the ocean, into light and rest. The metaphor sometimes employed is that the soul is like the flickering lamp, tossed by the winds and darkness, which loses itself completely in bright, noon-day sunshine, and remains still and quiet. To this doctrine the reply of the Vishnu worshipper (I am quoting from a writer in a contemporary Hindu magazine—the *Dawn*) is that it is too high for the people. Worship and prayer can only be addressed by ordinary folk to a personified Deity. The spiritual Brahma may be realized by intense thought and constant discipline of the mind, so that spirit can commune with spirit; but only the

## BRAHMINISM

ascetic who has arrived at the loftiest stage of devotional contemplation can reach this height. In the mean time, what is to be prescribed for the untrained, inferior souls? Man's spiritual cravings are as strong and as natural as his physical wants. What, then, should be his spiritual food? He should take shelter under something, to inspire him with hope, liberate him from fear, and qualify him to be grateful and loving, so that he may be loved in return. A theology which does not attempt to be popular can never be generally useful; and so it is necessary to accept and believe in ways of approaching the Deity that can be used and understood by the people. Yet, each of these two schools only professes to show a different path to the same goal of the soul's liberation, and its absorption into Pure Intelligence; for the Hindu mind cannot accept, as an ultimate notion, a personal Deity caught in the meshes of time, space, and causality. It must follow until He is placed somewhere beyond all phenomenal relations; although the problem of reconciling the conditional with the unconditional remains insoluble. This, I repeat, is the high philosophical religion at the back of the rough, outward, popular worship of all kinds of animals, stocks and stones, natural forces, deified men, local gods, and so on. I do not think that the common paganism of Europe in the old times had anything like this behind it, any more than the wild superstitions of uncivilized races have in other parts of the world

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

at this day. And, certainly, the Indian religions have one great advantage unknown, I think, to the ancient polytheisms—they have their sacred books.

This, then, is the philosophic religion at the back of the popular worship, to which it gives an explanation and a final purpose. For Brahminism holds out to all men, as its scheme of salvation, the hope of escape from the pain and weariness of sensitive existence in any shape or stage. If a Hindu be asked what is the object and ultimate good that he is striving to reach through religious rites and devotional exercises, he will answer "Liberation." Whether he be peasant or pundit, his reply will be the same; he must free his soul, the divine particle, from the bondage of the senses, from the pressure of encompassing phenomena, and so gradually become united with spiritual infinity. To attain this union, it must pass through very many bodies or forms of life; and whether the passage be short or long, easy or arduous, depends upon a man's deeds, whether they be good or ill, pleasing or displeasing to the high gods. Belief in the transmigration of souls is common among all primitive races, having probably been stamped on the imagination of mankind by the constant alternation of death and life in the natural order of things animate. With the Hindus, it has become, universally, the shape into which they have cast the instinctive clinging to some future existence which belongs to all humanity;

## BRAHMINISM

they are convinced that each birth is a waking out of sleep and a forgetting; and to the conception of a long journey, with many stages, they have added the good or moral purpose of purification and final changelessness. The inner self, that which speaks, is but a particle of the divine essence, which passes like a drop of water through cloud and river into the ocean. When we realize this to be the effective creed of Brahminism, we can understand how such a system, with its long, laborious way to salvation, its antipathy to action, its preference of grace to works, and its conception of divinity as something impersonal, remote, and everywhere diffused, stands totally apart from the energetic, unwavering religions of the West, from firm reliance on a personal God, the Judge and Moral Governor of mankind, to whom all must give immediate account after death.

In regard to the sacred books, they contain, partly, the sayings, precepts, and mystic utterances of the ancient sages; partly, prayers and psalms; and, partly, abstruse speculations on the divine nature, with scholastic dissertations and commentaries. The modern students and teachers of the various schools or sects of Brahminism treat these books as authoritative, and are constantly discussing, expounding, or adapting them to the ideas and circumstances of a people that is becoming profoundly affected by European modes of thought. One thing must be noticed in these books, that they are not historical; they



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

give no account of the rise or spreading of the religion, they do not trace it back to a founder, as in Christianity, Mohammedanism, or even Buddhism. The Hindu would say, in the words of an early Christian father, that the objects of religious knowledge are not historical, that such things in their essence can only be comprehended intellectually, or through divine inspiration. And the fact that Brahminism has no authentic and universally accepted sacred narrative, that it is not concentrated round the life and acts of a personal founder, is, I think, one reason why it has remained diffuse, incoherent, without a central figure or dominant plan. On the other hand, this very want, so to speak, of dogmatic backbone has left the religion elastic and tolerant, has enabled its teachers to assimilate and adapt the lower forms of worship, instead of endeavoring to destroy them.

Perhaps I may now have succeeded in showing where lies the true strength and backing of Indian polytheism, which looks at first sight so irrational, grotesque, and superficial. It is upheld and interpreted by the Brahmins, who hold the stewardship of the mysteries; so that, as the worshipper advances in intelligence and culture, he may find explanations which satisfy him, and inner meanings to account for outward forms. Although the Brahminic religion is not militant, does not make war upon rivals, nor openly go about to make proselytes, yet it is always ready to instruct and admit the ignorant folk into its outer courts; and

## BRAHMINISM

thus it gradually draws in the wilder races of India, who live in the woods and hills of the central region, or on the skirts of the mountains. It comprehends and absorbs miscellaneous beliefs and worships, treating all divinities as manifestations of universal power, discovering germs of truth in the lowest layers of superstition, and treating the way of ascent to higher notions as a kind of ladder, leading by steps from the bottom to the top.

“What is the meaning of toleration in the Vedic sense of the word? Not that which makes all souls equal, all castes equal, and creates a confusion worse confounded, defeating the providential design. The sacred teaching should be adapted to the souls in the order of their merit, but not that all souls, ripe or unripe, rude or unrude, barbarous or civilized, . . . should be adapted at once to the sacred teaching. The right meaning of toleration is, allowing each soul to stand on its own rung, and bidding it see below and see above, and understand that it has got over so many rungs, and that there are so many rungs to be got over still. The ladder is tremendously high. But if you should ill-advise that soul that its rung is false, and that your own rung, say several steps above the former, is true, and that it should get at once to your rung, is it possible or conceivable to jump over at once several intermediate rungs? In perfect concordance with the multifarious merits of the myriads of coexistent souls, the Perfect Lord has fixed the corresponding number of stages of religion.”

In this extract from the writing of an educated Hindu of the present day, we have the working principle of Brahminism, and its attitude towards the people at large, very fairly expounded. Never-



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

theless, we have always to remember that, while the religion is tolerant, philosophical, and non-militant, yet, if Brahminism were attacked by persecution, political pressure, or by some distinctly aggressive heresy within its own dominion, it would make an obstinate and dangerous resistance, and that any offensive disregard of caste rules or social prejudices might provoke a violent insurrection. But this is merely to say that a pacific religion may be formidable in self-defence.

The secret of Brahminism, therefore, is to make abstract religious conceptions popular by means of symbols, pictures, and images; and conversely to recognize the rude idolatry and nature-worship of the peasantry as being in some way the ignorant adoration of the greater gods. At the bottom of the religious scale, this worship is addressed to hills, rivers, or animals, to the thing or creature itself. Next follows the process of personifying the mountain or the flood, the tiger or the boar; they are the embodiment of deities who wield power, usually malignant; and it is gradually revealed that some profound theologic doctrine may be symbolically expressed by the same figures. On the slopes of the Himalayas, where Buddhism and Brahminism are intermixed, they worship certain mighty female deities called the Divine Mothers, who are types or incarnations of powerful energies that can harm or help mankind. One of the most famous of these deities is figured to the people as the Diamond Sav, whose image

## BRAHMINISM

may be seen at Benares, and who is also understood to be incorporate as the abbess of a Buddhist nunnery in Tibet. Now, the Buddhist symbol of ignorance, which is the efficient cause of all illusion, is a pig; while, on the other hand, the wild boar, like other fierce and destructive animals, is worshipped by primitive folk in the hills and forests. A most capable observer, Sir John Edgar, believes—and I quite agree with him—that this aboriginal boar-worship has become identified with the philosophical type of ignorance and illusion; so that here we have at one end of the ladder of religious evolution a mysterious dogma, and at the other end a wild beast. We have the same example in central India, where the boar has become one of the twelve great incarnations of Vishnu, and I may quote an account of the transforming process, as it was described thirty years ago by a missionary who wrote the best handbook of popular Hinduism that is known to me:

“ To the southeast of Ajmere is a district inhabited by a tribe called the Minas. An incident in the history of one of their progenitors, according to their present tradition, has led them to look on the boar as a sacred animal, though this may be a relic of boar-worship. When the Mohammedans came to India, the Minas seem to have confounded the Mohammedan horror of the boar as an unclean animal with their own regard for it as a sacred animal, and to have been induced, in some degree, to conform to their faith. In fact, they were half converted to Islam. Their old idol, however, they still worshipped, but gave it the Mohammedan name of Father Adam. Subsequently, the Saiva Brahmins got

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

hold of them. They did not persuade them to give up the worship of Father Adam or of the boar, but simply to allow that Father Adam was a name of Siva, and to worship the cow as well as the boar. Temples were erected in their principal villages and stones placed in them bearing representations of Siva as Father Adam, of a cow and a boar, and inscriptions to the effect that the Mohammedans respected the boar and the Hindus the cow, but the true followers of Father Adam respected both; and if they should neglect the worship of any one of the three, the worship of the other two would not benefit them. There are several Saiva temples in the district in which I heard the Brahmins invoke Mahadeva, and the Minas Father Adam."

The truth is that the method of reconciling all these religions with a double face, with an outer form and an inward meaning, is mysticism. The mystic is one who is illuminated by the light of real knowledge, who discerns the veiled divinity or the secret doctrine behind symbols, who perceives the unity of spiritual truth under many forms; and whose business it is gradually to lift the curtain to those who are fitted to understand, while he allows the stage-play to go on in front for the benefit of the crowd. This is, I think, the secret of the true Asiatic religion, and to a great degree the source of its strength and power of resistance. Of course, mysticism has existed in all religions, and has everywhere had its dangers; everywhere, it has led to pantheism, or the identification of God with nature, and even to the self-deification of the mystic himself—he fancies that he is himself divine and confuses himself with

## BRAHMINISM

God. But, in the West, this dissolving power of mysticism, which reduces all positive, outward religious beliefs and worship to symbolism, and regards the historical facts of religion as mere shadows and signs of mysterious truths, has been vigorously resisted both by Christian churches and by Islam. Instead of explaining the lower worships, they have trampled out and destroyed them; they have insisted on the unequivocal acceptance of the facts of sacred history as essential to salvation; and, undoubtedly, this has been one main reason why the militant faiths have conquered and kept a permanent dominion.

But, in eastern Asia, the two different faces of religion (I may call them the mythical and the mysterious) have remained and have worked together—the outer worship for the people who must have their innumerable deities, their images, and their miraculous legends; the inner teaching that explains all these things as symbolical, as signs and shadows of divine truths. You will understand that Hinduism and Buddhism have never set out formal creeds, containing articles of faith which a man must accept at his peril; they have not turned dogmatic propositions, such as those contained in the Athanasian Creed, into ecclesiastical laws, so that a heretic who disputed them might, as in the Middle Ages, be punished as a pernicious law-breaker. All these masterful methods of enforcing unity of belief, which gave the Roman Church such power in the Middle Ages,

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

and which caused religious wars and long persecutions, are unknown to the tolerant and somewhat indifferent religions of eastern Asia. The people could always worship as they liked; and the priests, or stewards of divine mysteries, did not attempt to persecute, because they treated all outward forms and rites as of little importance, the one thing really essential being the inner truth which lay behind.

Nevertheless, I repeat that, to my mind, the strength, for resistance against outward attack, of these Eastern religions lies in the fact that the polytheism is backed by the philosophy; the ruder worships are supported by intellectual explanations, and the two forms are closely allied; indeed, they blend and run into each other. But I do not pretend that this kind of understanding between simple worships and subtle interpretations is unknown elsewhere. On the contrary, the gradual elevation and refining of ritual and doctrine has always gone on, is still going on, in all societies that have a studious and intellectual priesthood. You find it in the Roman Catholic Church, which has a scientific theology for the elect, and manuals of simple devotion, full of miracles and saintly legends, for the masses. But, while it is the business of theology to provide a reasonable ground

- for implicit faith, no Christian church openly allows tampering with the plain statements of historic fact contained in revealed Scripture, or permits articles of faith to be treated as anything but

## BRAHMINISM

positive truths. Hinduism has neither one authorized revelation, nor a church to guarantee and uphold it. Yet, in one way, the very looseness of its formation is an advantage, because it can assimilate and find room for almost any religious conception, treating everything as a fresh manifestation of the all-pervading divine spirit. And science troubles the Eastern mystic no more than a fresh religion; for science may be understood as merely a symbolical language, shadowing forth the truths of divinity. One may even treat the Asiatic process of assimilating and melting down all religious ideas as belonging to the general intellectual tendency to accept the continuous growth and elevation by slow change of all forms and feelings, and the gradual development of higher and wider truths contained in primitive beliefs.

As the Brahmins would put it, their religion has two forms: the interior, which is invariable; the exterior, which may be constantly modified and adapted to circumstances. The interior truths, the divine secrets, the real way of salvation, are known only to a few; the great majority of men, being timid and ignorant, are concerned mainly in propitiating the powerful and malignant influences by which they fancy themselves to be surrounded. As knowledge increases, as man succeeds in subduing and controlling the forces of nature, he overcomes or despises the troubles of this transitory life, he attains spiritual indepen-



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

dence, and rises into a higher sphere of religion and morality. My suggestion is that a religion of this sort, which has its outworks in paganism and its citadel in pantheism, has always had great power of resistance and endurance, for the very reason that it can change and accommodate itself to social or intellectual conditions. How it will maintain itself in front of the rapid influx of European education and material civilization is another and much more difficult question. In India and in Japan, and to a certain degree wherever European influences have spread in eastern Asia, they are changing the whole atmosphere in which fantastic superstitions and metaphysical speculations grow and flourish; they are introducing orderly government and pacific leisure, scientific methods of inquiry and critical reasoning. Yet, after all, the influence of Europe is mostly industrial and political; we are reorganizing the old-fashioned Asiatic governments and developing commerce and the sources of wealth. I hope that the morality, public and private, of the countries that are falling within the sphere of European influence will be improved. I am not sure what effect may be produced upon the profound spiritualism of eastern Asia.

And this brings us to the weak side of a religion, which, though intensely spiritualistic, is founded on somewhat vague philosophy, and embraces schools of thought, accepts different theories as to the divine nature. It has no dogmatic rulings upon

## BRAHMINISM

such questions as are settled by Christian and Mohammedan creeds; and, since it has no ecclesiastical laws, it requires no man's implicit obedience to its teachings. I do not say that Hinduism contains nothing more than philosophic speculations and devotional rhapsodies. In the ascetic desire to be rid of the flesh, to extinguish worldly thought, and, above all, in the longing to escape illusion, change, and all the ills of earthly existence, there is a dominant strain of morality; and the great doctrine of transmigration of souls may well operate as insisting on the penalties of sin and the way of ascending to salvation by purity of conduct. Yet Hinduism, and even Buddhism, has never succeeded in so limiting and clearly stating certain rules of faith and morals as to lay down and impress them upon the people at large, for their practical guidance in life. They have nothing, for instance, like our Ten Commandments or the Lord's Prayer, which order our lives and direct our consciences.

It would be presumptuous to attempt any kind of prediction as to the religious future of India, what will be the nature and direction of the changes that must follow altered circumstances and larger experiences. The antique polytheism will probably disappear, though slowly, before wider and more precise conceptions and before a higher standard of rational morality. Long ago, indeed, the Hindu philosophy struck out one line of thought that undermines all anthropomorphic conceptions

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

of divinity—that ultimate being must be out of relation with the phenomenal world, except, possibly, by an unconscious projection of creative energy. But metaphysical ideas, though they are the central stronghold of all religious systems, have little or no influence upon the multitude; and the more practical question is, What effect will be wrought upon educated Hindus by the teachings of physical science? The supremely dominant principle of modern times is that the world is in a course of continual evolution, that life from the protoplasm is but a phase of immemorable existence, and that the death of individuals is merely the natural process whereby all material forms are thrown into the crucible for reproduction in fresh diversity. But this principle has already been recognized by Indian thinkers, with the vital difference that to them the whole order of nature was spiritual, it was stated in terms of vast metaphysical theories regarding the deified forces and the mysterious relation to phenomena of some Absolute Being from whom all souls issue and to whom they return in dreamless sleep. The Indians could not agree to change a philosophic doctrine for a scientific discovery. On the contrary, they would accept Coleridge's view that the development theory, a theory of progress as regards the physical being, is typical of the progress of man as a spiritual being; that the living soul, springing from an unknown eternity, is capable of endless improvement, ever rising higher and higher

## BRAHMINISM

through numberless cycles of existence. They would firmly resist the invasion of the spiritual domain by uncompromising materialism, which would insist on dissipating all the allegories, symbolisms, personifications, and theosophies, leaving only the mechanical processes of plastic matter, the observation of phenomena, and, possibly, as some cold comfort, the worship of Humanity. If we are to have the cultus of Humanity, why not of all sentient life, of nature in its totality? And that will bring us round again to a materialistic pantheism. But the Hindu mind is essentially speculative and transcendental; it will never consent to be shut up in the prison of sensual experience, for it has grasped and holds firmly the central idea that all things are manifestations of some power outside phenomena. And the tendency of contemporary religious discussion in India, so far as it can be followed from a distance, is towards an ethical reform on the old foundations, towards searching for some method of reconciling their Vedic theology with the practice of religion taken as a rule of conduct and a system of moral government. One can already discern a movement in various quarters towards a recognition of impersonal theism, and towards fixing the teaching of the philosophical schools upon some definitely authorized system of faith and morals, which may satisfy a rising ethical standard, and may thus permanently embody that tendency to substitute spiritual devotion

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

for external forms and caste rules which is the characteristic of the sects that have from time to time dissented from orthodox Brahminism.

A. C. LYALL.

**ZOROASTRIANISM AND THE  
PARSIS**



## ZOROASTRIANISM AND THE PARSIS

AMONG the numerous divisions and subdivisions of Indian castes, there is a foreign ethnical group, which, in spite of its alien environments and utter isolation, has been able for centuries to preserve the purity of its race and faith and most of its traditional customs. We mean the adepts of the prophet of Iran, Zoroaster, successively called by the European travellers who have met them on the Indian coast, "Parseos," "Parses," "Parsees," "Parsis"; they are the descendants of the fugitives who fled from Persia after the Mohammedan conquest, and settled at Sanjan in the eighth century of the Christian era. What was their exact number? Probably a very small one. Was this exodus from Persia the only one? It appears that several others took place, traces of which can be found in upper India; but the colony of Guzarat alone resisted the influence of their surroundings, and did not merge into the native populations. Nevertheless, they were—they are still—a mere drop in the vast ocean of



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

Indian communities, and at first they would seem to be a negligible quantity, except for the scholars who see in them the last representatives of one of the oldest creeds of the world and the depositaries of the sacred books of the Avesta and Persian lore. They are, in fact, the most active agents of progress and reform in British India, and have to be considered from a double standpoint, both religious and social. They occupy such a conspicuous position that an excellent critic affirms that "it is scarcely possible to conceive of the public life of western India without them." This judgment will meet with no contradiction from any quarter. However, we would not have the conclusion drawn from this that the Parsis are the only workers in the vast field of civic usefulness. There are among the other communities deserving men, bent on promoting the welfare of India; but, beyond any doubt, at the dawn of the twentieth century, the Parsis are enjoying a well-deserved reputation for enlightened patriotism.

"By their natural ability and position in the country, they were well fitted thus to be the mediators between the rulers and the ruled, and they are now playing this part to a considerable extent. In political and literary matters, the Parsis have led the Hindus and the Mohammedans. At the head of most political associations, at any rate in Bombay, and in the vanguard of those who fight, rightly or wrongly, for the political advancement of educated Indians, are to be found men of this race. It is a Parsi for whom has been reserved the unique position of being the first Oriental to take a seat in the British House of Commons. . . . In

## ZOROASTRIANISM AND THE PARSIS

social matters, they easily take the lead of their Hindu countrymen, as they are singularly free from those narrow views of caste which hamper the latter. . . . It is a Parsi who has taken up the cause of Social Reform among the Hindu population, and tried to better the lot of millions of women, mute victims of unequal laws and customs manufactured during the dark ages of Indian history." \*

Through their association with Europeans, the Parsis have undergone a complete change and have taken their place in our modern society. It has even been suggested that they are so thoroughly Anglicized that they are lacking in interest. Quite the reverse is the case. It is their very readiness to accept the improvements of life and to assimilate our methods, their unprejudiced and broad-minded intellect, combined with a passionate attachment to their ancestral creed, which make them so sympathetic. We hope that in this short sketch we shall be able to show that Western civilization will not destroy Zoroastrianism, and that the future of the small Parsi community is not to be looked to either with concern or apprehension on the sole pretence that they are gradually discarding purely Hindu customs. What has garb to do with inner life and faith? A Parsi can tread the whole earth, wear any sort of dress, embrace any career, provided he keep pure in his heart the tenets of his religion, and make them sensible to his fellow-men by putting into practice his immortal precepts of *good thoughts, good words, good deeds*.

\* Karkara, *Forty Years of Progress and Reform*, p. 50.

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

Such is our own opinion, and it is likely to be shared by any one who will study the transformation of the social status of the Parsis.

### I

In 716 A.D., after a succession of hardships, a small troop of Persians, warriors and priests, fled from their own native land and disembarked at Sanjan, which is situated twenty-five miles south of Damaun (Guzarat), in quest of a permanent abode where they could freely practise their religious rites. At that time, Sanjan was a flourishing emporium, and a favorable welcome was given to the exiles. The Hindu prince, the wise Tadi Rana, greeted the *dasturs* (or priests), and asked them several questions about their creeds and habits. The answers of the learned priests were so satisfactory that a sort of compact was passed between the immigrants and the Rana, who gave them permission to settle in his territory, and granted them the privilege of building a temple of the sacred fire. In their turn, the Persians submitted to certain obligations, as, for example, to wear no arms, to dress according to the Hindu fashion, to adopt some of the local customs; and they so strictly adhered to the clauses that, up to the present time, some of them are still observed. It is most important to note the starting-point of the friendly intercourse of the Parsis with the native populations.

## ZOROASTRIANISM AND THE PARSIS

For years and years the Parsis lived in perfect peace and harmony; they increased in number and dispersed in small knots over the whole of Guzarat. The Mohammedan conquest at first did them harm. They had sided with the Rana against the Sultan of Ahmedabad; after the storming of Sanjan they had much to suffer from their new rulers, and the sacred fire was removed from place to place. However, by degrees, the Parsis grew accustomed to the Mohammedans and had no persecution to suffer.

It seems that, during that time, the community was wholly engaged in agricultural pursuits and absorbed in the practice of their religion. The European travellers, Friar Jordanus, to begin with, mention them in their narratives and relate some of their customs—for instance, fire worship and funeral rites. At the close of the fifteenth century occurred a most solemn hour in the history of the refugees, viz., the renewal of the intercourse with the persecuted Zoroastrians, or Ghebers, who had persisted in dwelling in Persia. A wealthy and influential Parsi, a resident of Nausari, named Changa Asa, at his own expense, deputed a talented *beh-din* (layman), Nariman Floschang, to Yezd and Kirman, in order to obtain answers to a certain number of questions relating to religion. The Ghebers were overjoyed to see their co-religionist; they did not know that any of their brethren had settled in India. From that time, the relations between the

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

Indian and Persian communities were never interrupted.

Under the Mogul rule, the Parsis continued to prosper. After having been tillers, toddy-drawers, carpenters, cabinet-makers, they became wealthy land-owners, ship-builders, and, in general, extensive traders. Their principal headquarters were Nausari, the priestly town; Surat, the great market of the East; Bombay, the dowry of the Portuguese bride of Charles II. Caste system had proved extremely beneficial in preserving their religious independence, but had left them totally unprejudiced, and had put no barrier between them and the foreigners. Hence the great advantage to them in mixing freely with the Europeans who were beginning to traffic with India; so that, far from keeping aloof from the Portuguese, the Dutch, the English, they made their services acceptable and acted as middlemen between the new-comers and the natives. By degrees they supplanted the supple *banyan*,\* they became brokers of the factories, *dubashes, shroffs*.† Their influence prevailed, and their pent-up energies at last found a vast field for developing themselves. Thanks to unexpected opportunities, an enterprising spirit, and no objection to sea voyages, they opened an extensive trade with the Far East, especially with China, Burma, and the Straits. In the mean

\* *Banyan*, a Hindu trader, and especially of the province of Guzarat. (See P. della Valle, i., 486-7, and Lord, Preface.)

† *Shroff*, a money-lender, a banker. (Ar. *sarrâf*, also *sairaf*.)

## ZOROASTRIANISM AND THE PARSIS

time, they were doing good and loyal service to the United East India Company. Such is the origin of their attachment to British rule and of the particular regard and esteem of the British government for them.

Europe also had early attracted them. In the seventeenth century a Parsi had already come over to England, and in the following century Maniar was Burke's guest at Beaconsfield.

Wealth rewarded the commercial skill and extreme honesty of the Parsi traders; it made them powerful and influential. Their liberality was universally known; such men as Sorabji Mancherji Readymoney and Ardeshir Dady fed thousands of people during the famines. Towers of silence, fire temples, *dharmśālas*,\* charitable institutions, hospitals, colleges, were in turn erected by the munificent gifts of their merchant princes. Above all, they were remarkable for their spirit of catholicity, which recognized no difference of race, caste, and religion. Ovington, as early as 1689, had noticed this tendency. In 1842, Jamshedji Jijibhai, the Bombay merchant so well known in the whole of India for his charities, was honored with knighthood, and in 1857 was created baronet, the first native to whom this coveted distinction was granted.

Such was the situation of the community in the early fifties of the nineteenth century. At that time (1852) Briggs could write with accuracy that

\* *Dharmśāla* (pious edifice), a resting-house for wayfarers.

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

"the bent of the Parsi community was purely commercial." He was perfectly right, and the evolution, which has turned an exclusively mercantile caste into the one priding itself most on its education and its intellectual pursuits, was only beginning to develop. It is nearly achieved, at least in the main lines. Nowadays, the Parsi is no more the broker, or *dubash*, of the European; he sits next to him on the benches of the corporations, in the high courts, at the Legislative and Vice-Regal Council — nay, even in Parliament. No wonder that such a contact has modified his customs and habits. What has become of the banyan's co-worker, once in dress and occupation so much like his rival that sometimes European travellers have confused the two? The Parsi has abandoned his white garments, his curved shoes; in India his brown *pagri* alone distinguishes him. On the Continent, he is an English gentleman.

This transformation that we are now witnessing is entirely due to Western education, and its influence on a race whose plasticity is undeniable, and whose powers of assimilation are of the rarest order. This will be seen presently.

## II

The Parsis were the first natives to take advantage of Western education in the Bombay Presidency; as soon as the mission schools set

## ZOROASTRIANISM AND THE PARSIS

to work and the Elphinstone Institution afforded a chance for intelligent youths, the Parsis flocked to them, in order to benefit by the modern training and equip themselves for a new mode of life. This eagerness to learn had already incited their best men of the former generation to attend the schools of the Eurasians and retired soldiers for the purpose of mastering English. However, it was only in 1849 that the enlightenment of the bulk of the community was seriously undertaken by Sir Jamshedji Jijibhai, who established the Parsi Benevolent Institution for indigent Parsis. The schools soon imparted the blessings of education, free of charge, to thousands of pupils in Bombay and the Mofussil. Sir Jamshedji's example was followed by wealthy co-religionists, and instruction rapidly spread among the lower classes.

Nearly at the same time a spirit of reform had inflamed some generous, enterprising men, Furdunji Naorozji, Behramji Ghaudi, Manakji Kharshedji, Dadabhai Naorozji, who were later on joined by S. S. Bengali, K. N. Kabraji, and others. The reformers were bent on erasing from their family life and inner organization the old Hindu varnish, and they set diligently to work. Their task was not an easy one. In 1861 Mr. Dadabhai Naorozji, in a lecture delivered at the Liverpool Philo-Asiatic Society, explained the peculiar condition of his own community. He said :

“ Under ordinary circumstances it may not be difficult to give a general account of the existing manners and customs



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

of a people ; but, in the case of the Parsis, in the present transitional state of their social and intellectual condition, it is difficult to say what the whole community observe and believe."

He then established a distinction between the old class and the young one, the orthodox and the reformers, and gave a rapid description of the habits of both, one steeped in an obstinate Hindu conservatism, the other full of Western aspirations. The priestly influence had been appealed to by the two parties. And any one who desires to follow the phases of the struggle can peruse the old Guzarati reports of the associations started in order to support or refute each other's views. Female education formed, also, a serious part of the programme of the reformers. Parsi ladies were allowed to move about freely, to emancipate themselves from the secluded life which the Hindu fashion had compelled them to adopt. The Parsi's house was gradually becoming a happy home, instead of a gloomy zenana; the Parsi's wife was made his companion, his children his friends. "Just as the influence of English education had operated on their mental condition, the example of the English modes of life and domestic habits had worked a revolution in their social condition."

Journalism and politics first attracted the most educated; the community soon produced a group of able and qualified professors, barristers, architects, publicists, doctors, and scientists. The

## ZOROASTRIANISM AND THE PARSIS

admission of natives to the different branches of the public service also increased their eagerness to win degrees and diplomas. "The schoolmaster is abroad," Dadabhai had said in his Liverpool lecture; and this far-away schoolmaster, whose influence was so keenly felt, was in fact the most important personage at that stage of the Parsis' social evolution.

The ladies were not long in soliciting complete equality with their lords. Vernacular, Anglo-vernacular, and English institutions afforded them the best opportunities. Some of them matriculated; others followed the whole university training, and were among the very first Indian ladies to obtain degrees (B.A.). In medicine, especially, they are at their best; Parsi lady-doctors are numerous and talented. In 1900 Miss P. B—— has become M.A., the only Indian lady who has gained that degree.

Now, in order to acquaint our readers with the men of whom the Parsis have just reason to be proud, we shall introduce to them the two great personalities alluded to in the first pages of this article—Mr. Dadabhai Naorozji and Mr. Behramji Malabari. Both are the best representatives of the aspirations of the forward party in politics and social reform.

Mr. Dadabhai Naorozji sums up in his long life the whole evolution of his own community. Born in 1825 among the priestly class, he was forced to submit to the Hindu custom of infant marriage, which had also made havoc among the

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

Parsis. Under the excellent tuition of an intelligent mother, he was most successful in his college career, and was among the first batch of Elphinstonians, won prizes and medals, and was the first native appointed to the chair of mathematics and natural history at the Elphinstone Institution (1852-54). He soon resigned his professorship, and went to England as a partner in Mr. K. R. Cama's firm, the first established in London through the agency of natives. In 1874 we see him at the court of the Gaekwar of Baroda, exercising the functions of *diwan* (prime minister); then, in 1885, he was appointed by Lord Reay a member of the Bombay Legislative Council. After having failed in 1856, he succeeded in being elected in 1892 as a Liberal member of the House of Commons by a London constituency (Central Finsbury Division).

That a native can be returned to Parliament will excite the wonder of foreigners. Let them remember that a native is a British subject. Let them also reflect upon the number of difficulties which a candidature of that kind is certain to encounter! At the fall of Mr. Gladstone's ministry Mr. Dadabhai retired.

Such are the main lines of this useful career. Mr. Dadabhai's activity has been unparalleled, his zeal for the welfare of India indefatigable. In his youth, he was already at work with the Bombay reformers; in England, he endeavored to bring India nearer to the metropolis, to promote

## ZOROASTRIANISM AND THE PARSIS

among the natives the advantages of a system of education which would enable them to take an active share in the administration of their country. He also presided over the national congress, and started with Mr. B. Malabari the *Voice of India*, at the instigation of Sir W. Wedderburn. There he pursued the same object which he always kept in view, namely, to connect India with England and to place the two countries in direct relationship with each other without the intervention of the Anglo-Indians. His chief occupation for years has been the study of financial questions of the highest order. He has striven—he still strives—to denounce the causes of the increasing poverty of India, the very causes of the two last disastrous famines which were pointed out by Mr. B. Malabari in his remarkable memoir of *India in 1897*, and recently by Mr. Digby, so well known as the originator and honorary secretary of the Indian Famine Relief Fund in 1877.

Next to Mr. Dadabhai ranks the great reformer, Mr. Behramji M. Malabari. "He is not a noisy politician," says his Hindu biographer, Mr. Dayaram Gidumal, "but he has had no small share in moulding the political history of the last ten years. He has been the right hand of Dadabhai Naorozji, and by his moderation as editor of a leading native paper, and by his influence with the native press, did yeoman's service in times of trouble." Indeed, he has succeeded in making

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

the *Indian Spectator* the people of India's own paper. "Being a man of the people himself," says the *Bombay Review*, "he could understand the great majority of the nation, and was particularly fitted for being a trustworthy interpreter between rulers and ruled." An excellent *Guzarati* poet, wielding a powerful English pen, he had at an early age acquired a great reputation.

His life is not without a romance. The autobiography of his childhood is "*inoublable*," to quote the expression of the French critic Filon, and is worthy of a place beside Rousseau's *Confessions*, Dickens's *David Copperfield*, and Daudet's *Petite Chose*. Mr. Malabari was left a penniless orphan at the early age of twelve years. He bravely fought the hard battle of life, teaching the whole day boys older than himself, and during sleepless nights warbling beautiful *Guzarati* tunes, the whole time sustained in his hard struggle by the invisible presence of his departed saint, his beloved mother. "Firdausi sings of Rustam having carried the dead bones of his son Sorab round his neck in a string to remind him of his irreparable loss. I carry my mother about in the spirit. She is always present to me. In every good woman I see my mother. I pity every bad or ill-used woman for my mother's sake."

At thirty he was a successful man, and wealth and honors were within his reach, when suddenly

## ZOROASTRIANISM AND THE PARSIS

a change came over him. He began to speculate about the evils that mar the Hindu civilization in the higher classes, infant marriage and enforced widowhood, and took an intense interest in the inner movement of social reform, which was silently at work among some thoughtful Hindus. He resolved to join them, to take the lead, if no other would do it, and for ten long years he was engrossed in his task. Lectures, pamphlets, tracts—all over India—voyages to London, he used any resource at hand; until at last he succeeded in obtaining from the government the promulgation of the Age of Consent Act, which actually puts a stop to infant marriages and diminishes the chances of early widowhood (1891). Heaven alone knows the persecutions that the noble soul had to bear from the orthodox party; the Brahminic cliquism is so well able to abuse and revile adversaries! Hindus, generally speaking, are so touchy! They do not like to be lectured by outsiders. The result was that he, Mr. Malabari, who had been the most popular among his contemporaries, when he took social reform in hand, immediately lost his popularity; but he did not care. He had made up his mind, and he accepted the consequences of his generous resolution. He sacrificed excellent opportunities in order to be independent, and set a sublime example of disinterestedness; he refused honors, such as the shrievalty of Bombay and knighthood (1887). In return, he gained the admiration of the enlightened few

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

who remained loyal to him. "The country that produces a man of that stamp," said Max Müller, "is not a decadent country, but may look forward to a bright, sunny future, as it can look back with satisfaction, and even pride, on four thousand years of a not inglorious history."

In literature, Mr. Malabari's name is the most familiar to English readers from his well-known work, *The Indian Eye on English Life*, and his *Guzarat and the Guzaratis*. Some people see in him "the best among the men whom India is producing, in the course of her new development" under British rule. We admit that there is some force in that description, but we shall here repeat what we have stated elsewhere. There are others of Mr. Malabari's contemporaries who can with equal justice be described as the best products of English education. To him we shall assign a different rôle. "If in the annals of his community Mr. Malabari is the first independent thinker, and, in those of India, the greatest reformer, still in his thought, wholly emancipated, he belongs to the civilization of the world, and, by his work, to the history of humanity. In fact, Mr. Malabari shines brightest when least indebted to outside influence; in essence, he is a Parsi and an Indian."

Now, though young, he lives almost the life of a recluse, visits plague hospitals and famine camps. When in Europe, either in Paris or London, he studies social questions and keeps aloof from society. Some day he will again appear with a

## ZOROASTRIANISM AND THE PARSIS

new ideal, a new aim connected with the welfare of India.

### ✓ III

Max Müller long ago pointed out that the extreme simplicity of Parsi-ism is the cause of the great attachment of its devotees, the cause, also, of the rare facility with which the Parsi accepts outward changes without incurring the risk of impeaching his faith. We cannot attempt to sum up the whole history of Zoroastrianism in a few lines. Every one keeps in his memory the glorious career of the Persian Empire. After the Mohammedan conquest, it disappeared from the view of the world, and for centuries was faithfully preserved in the two small communities of Persia and India. The European scholars were left to their own speculations, and possessed only such information as could be derived from the classics.

When Anquetil Duperron brought Avesta to Europe, it created a great sensation. He gave a new impetus to science, and people know the glorious work done later by Burnouf and his followers. The Parsis, at first, were totally ignorant of the European studies bearing upon their sacred books. In fact, the attacks of a missionary, Dr. J. Wilson, on the question of conversion, obliged the *dasturs* to come forward and explain the tenets of their religion. They did it in full earnestness and fairness, preserving



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

their pure traditional doctrine. It was only when Dr. Haug was appointed superintendent of Sanscrit studies in the Poona College, and was brought into contact with the priests, that the distrust subsided. Dr. Haug even collaborated with one of the *dasturs*, Hoshanji Jamaspji. Another decisive step was taken by a clever *beh-din*, Mr. K. R. Cama: on his return from Europe, where he had been acquainted with savants of high repute—Spiegel, for instance—he undertook to teach Zend and Phelvi on the modern philological principles, and introduced them among his co-religionists. Now there is a complete parallelism between the methods of the two schools of Europe and India. The latter produces original works and valuable translations, which do the greatest honor to the community.

Moreover, the *dasturs*, who for so long had carefully concealed the tenets of their religion, grew even more and more willing to give information about them. Sometimes they do not quite agree with the views of our Western scholars. No wonder; science and faith cannot use the same criterion.

Zoroastrianism, or Parsi-ism, is a monotheistic form of religion, not a polytheistic one, as some people would have it. There is but one God under different names, *Mazda*, *Ahura*, and *Ahura-Mazda*. He manifested himself to a Bactrian or Median philosopher or reformer, Zoroaster, who is considered to have constituted a religious doctrine, set

## ZOROASTRIANISM AND THE PARSIS

forth in the sacred books of Avesta. According to Herodotus, the Persians had no images of the gods, no temples, no altars, and they considered the use of them a sign of folly. The modern Parsis are of the same opinion as their forefathers, and repudiate any representation of the deity.

Zoroaster's speculative philosophy teaches us that the world is the work of two hostile principles, Spenta-Maynu, the good principle, and Angra-Maynu, the evil principle, both serving under one God—the first being the author of whatever is bright and shining, good and useful; the second of what is dark and noxious. The conflict will end in the triumph of the good principle.

The confusion of the philosophical and theological system has given rise to the belief in dualism, and led to the identification of the principle of good with Ahura-Mazda himself. Let us here quote Dr. Haug, whose authority is so great in these matters. "The Parsis are strict monotheists, and, whatever may have been the views of former philosophical writings, their one supreme divinity is Ahura-Mazda. Their view of Angra-Maynu seems to differ in no respect from what is supposed to be the orthodox Christian view of the devil." In man himself we find the same struggle. Salvation depends entirely on his own efforts and deeds; so it becomes his peremptory duty to lead a holy life and to think, to speak, and to act righteously. The Mazdayasnian religion enjoins a sublime code of ethics. Mgr. de Harlez has rightly said that

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

the Mazdian religion is distinguished from all other ancient religions in this—that it has a “moral systematized and founded upon philosophic principles.” The late lamented Dr. Haug also observes that the moral philosophy of Zoroaster is moving in the triad of thought, word, and deed. These three words form the pivot upon which the moral structure of Zoroastrianism turns.

But in the company of holy souls will be the reward of the pure; the wicked will go to the house of impurity and utter darkness. But at the end of the world (which is to be synchronous with the end of the present cycle) there will be a general purification and regeneration. All souls will be furnished with new bodies and commence a life of ineffable bliss. “Then he [the Saostriant\*] shall restore the world, which will [thenceforth] never grow old and never die, never decaying and never rotting, ever living and ever increasing, and master of its wish, when the dead will rise, when life and immortality will come, and the world will be restored at [God’s] wish.” †

Zoroastrian worship consists of oral recitations of portions of the sacred words, or such recitations combined and accompanied with the performance of ritual. The offerings are fruit, flowers, milk, incense, especially the juice of the haoma plant. The offices are few; they are performed by priests, who constitute a distinct class apart from the rest; no layman can become a priest; no priest can

\* The Messiah of the Parsis.

† *Zamyad Yasht*, p. 89.

## ZOROASTRIANISM AND THE PARSIS

even marry the daughter of a layman. In the priestly class, all the youths now do not pass through the Navar and Martab ceremonies which made them priests (*ervad*). The dignity of *dastur* is the highest in the craft. Their duties are numerous; they have to attend to the service of the temples and keep the fire constantly burning there. The ancient Iranians always regarded this element as the symbol of divinity and, as such, worthy of respect; but they never professed themselves to be the worshippers of the Fire. The modern Parsis consider fire "as an emblem of refulgence, glory, and light, as the most perfect symbol of God and as the best and noblest representative of his divinity." Bishop Meurin has given his opinion about fire reverence in such excellent and choice expressions that we cannot help quoting them. "I am, therefore, very far from supposing that the Parsi fire worship is idolatry. Whoever accuses the Parsis of that most heinous of all crimes, and is not able to prove that they believe fire or sun to be God himself, is certainly guilty of the most detestable sin of calumny."

The Zoroastrian is not forced to attend places of worship in order to say his prayers nor to wait for a priest. The old Iranians, as is well known, deemed that nature in all its grandeur is their temple of worship. Often, at Bombay, numbers of Parsis go to the sea-shore and recite their prayers, with their faces turned to the rising or the setting sun.

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

The religious obligations of the Parsi are few. Between the age of seven and five a Zoroastrian must be invested with the *sudeah* (shirt) and *kushti* (girdle), which are the visible symbols or emblems of the Mazdayasni religion. The ceremony is called *naojot* (new, or first, worship). The candidate declares himself to be a worshipper of Mazda, a follower of Zoroaster, an opponent of *daevas* (false gods), and subject to the laws of Ahura. Marriage is blessed by a priest; the outward pomp is, or rather was, totally Hindu. As to death and funeral rites, the ceremonies are most antique; the mode of disposing of the dead on high walls or stone platforms (towers of silence) is purely Avestic. Of course, it has long been and it still is an object of wonder to foreigners; but, after a consideration of the laws of hygiene and sanitation, the most averse to the custom grow reconciled to it.

A remarkable feature of modern Parsi-ism is the repugnance of the whole community either to proselytism or conversion. It is a fact that the Parsis have always been deaf to the allurements of the Brahminic worship and to the earnest appeals of Christian missionaries. The coarse Hinduism of the present could not tempt the pure soul of the monotheistic Mazdayasni; as to the appeals of the missionaries, they have been also fruitless for other reasons. The remembrance of the few conversions made by Dr. Wilson (1839) is still very bitter. At that time, a Zoroastrian boastingly

## ZOROASTRIANISM AND THE PARSIS

could say to the ardent apostle: "With regard to the conversion of a Parsi, you cannot even dream of the event, because even a Parsi babe crying in the cradle is firmly confident in the venerable Zarthust." Since then conversions have been rare.

The best proof of the attachment of the enlightened Parsi to his religion is to be found in Dr. Wilson's *protégé*, Mr. Malabari, whose companion and class-fellow, S. D. B.—, embraced Christianity. Mr. Malabari has stated that he resisted the influence of his old and respected friend, simply because he believed in salvation by faith and by word, but did not think the mediation of another absolutely necessary for salvation. However, he is not one of those who speak lightly of Christ. "I know not," he says, "if India will become Christian, and when. But this much I know, that the life and work of Christ must tell in the end. After all, He is no stranger to us Easterns. How much He brings back to us refined and modernized!" As to the missionaries, he fully acknowledges their good service to the cause of civilization.

"We are indebted to them for the first start in the race for intellectual emancipation. It is to them that we are beholden for some of our most cherished political and social acquisitions. . . . Apart from its active usefulness, the Christian mission serves as a buffer for the side of skepticism usually inseparable from intellectual emancipation. At a time when doubt and distrust are to take the place of reasoned inquiry among the younger generation of India, I feel bound to acknowledge in my own person the benefits I have derived

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

from a contact with the spirit of Christianity. But for that holy contact I could scarcely have grown into the stanch and sincere Zoroastrian that I am, with a keen appreciation of all that appeals readily to the intelligence and a reverend curiosity for what appeals to the heart, knowing full well that much of what is mysterious to man is not beneath, but beyond, the comprehension of a finite being."

The Parsis are totally ignorant of propaganda; they are most tolerant and never attempt to change the creed of any one. Were they always so? Is their present reserve in keeping with the Zoroastrian precepts? It seems that in days of yore they were more zealous. Some ancient treatises are of an essentially propagandist character, and we cannot help alluding to the most severe persecutions that the Christians had to endure under the Sassanian princes. Nevertheless, the Parsis, in India, show the greatest reluctance to increase their number, not only by conversion, but also by any alliance with people of other religions. So that they have to multiply by marrying among themselves; fortunately, they belong to a prolific race, if we consider the small number of the first settlers and their present position.

### IV

According to the general census of 1891, the number of Parsis then in India was 89,904; 76,774 are quartered in the Bombay Presidency. The city of Bombay has a flourishing Parsi popula-

## ZOROASTRIANISM AND THE PARSIS

tion of 47,498 souls; Surat, 12,757; then we can mention Broach, Thana, Karachi, etc. The priestly town of Nausari is, perhaps, the most important of the settlements outside British territory. The occupations in the lower classes are varied and numerous. It is remarkable that the Parsis have never taken to the more menial employments, such as those of day-laborers, scavengers, palki-bearers, barbers, washermen, grooms, etc. Before the terrible trials of plague and famine, among thousands of mendicants there were only five Parsis, four males and one female. As to the victims of immorality, a Parsi was proud to record that "not a single Parsi female returned herself as living on the wages of shame." \*

The Parsis are not exclusively quartered in India. Some are to be found in China (Canton, Macao, Hong - Kong), Penang, Rio, Mauritius, Cape Town, Madagascar, Australia. We do not mention Europe, where they come frequently, either for study or pleasure, never for a permanent stay, except in London.

We must not forget the small group of the Zoroastrians living in the Persian provinces of Yezd and Kirman. Their condition was for years miserable to a degree. The number of the educated few is limited; the head of the Yezd community is Mr. Ardashir Mihraban, with whom the writer became acquainted through Mr. E. G. Browne, the eminent lecturer on Persian at Cambridge, his

\* Karaka, *History of the Parsis*.



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

guest in Persia. In spite of his endeavors, he has not yet succeeded in raising the intellectual level of his co-religionists. Their social status is very low, indeed; and it is even difficult—this we know from experience—to lighten their burdens, as they are still too ignorant to understand the benefits of certain improvements.

Their condition has been greatly ameliorated by Nasr-Eddin, who, by a firman, restored them to a footing of equality with his Mohammedan subjects (1882). Their number did not exceed 9,269 in 1891. They are remarkable for their honesty and chastity. Their Indian brethren have started a fund on their behalf.

### V

What is the future of the Parsis? The question is momentous, and it is difficult for an outsider to decide. Socially, they are growing more and more important; the number of their distinguished men is daily increasing, and they have acquired a wide-spread influence. Now, as to religion, they are certainly more enlightened than their forefathers; but are they the same staunch believers as their predecessors? European rationalism does not spare their sacred books, and the spirit of free inquiry seems to have inflamed some of their young men. It has rightly preoccupied thoughtful philosophers. Mr. Malabari calls his co-religionists "a flock without a shepherd," and he is right.

## ZOROASTRIANISM AND THE PARSIS

The community lacks unity; that is evidently the weak point. For years and years the Parsis were led by their own *Panchayet*,\* which ceased to exist after the promulgation of the laws of marriage and inheritance. The courts took the place of the *anjuman*.† On the other hand, the authority of the *Dastur Dasturan*,‡ being purely nominal, had ceased also to be effective. So that the two supports, religious and civil, happened to fail at almost the same time.

The Parsis have thus reached a turning-point in their national career, a period as important as that when they began to mingle with Moham-medans and Europeans. The revival which followed has not yet ended, and they seem launched on the path of progress; but there are symptoms of such a rapid change in customs and ideals that one feels almost afraid of such rapidity.

Fortunately—if we can say so—all the classes are not yet won over. The contest between the old class and the young one is by no means settled. There are still Parsis in the Mofussil who are steeped in a pure conservatism. These are the very men who will serve as a dam to restrain the violence of the flood. Gradually, they will be gained to the cause of modern education, and they will allow the forward party to try experiments which will guard the new generation against exaggerated theories. They will also learn that they lack

\* The National Assembly of the Parsis.      † An assembly.

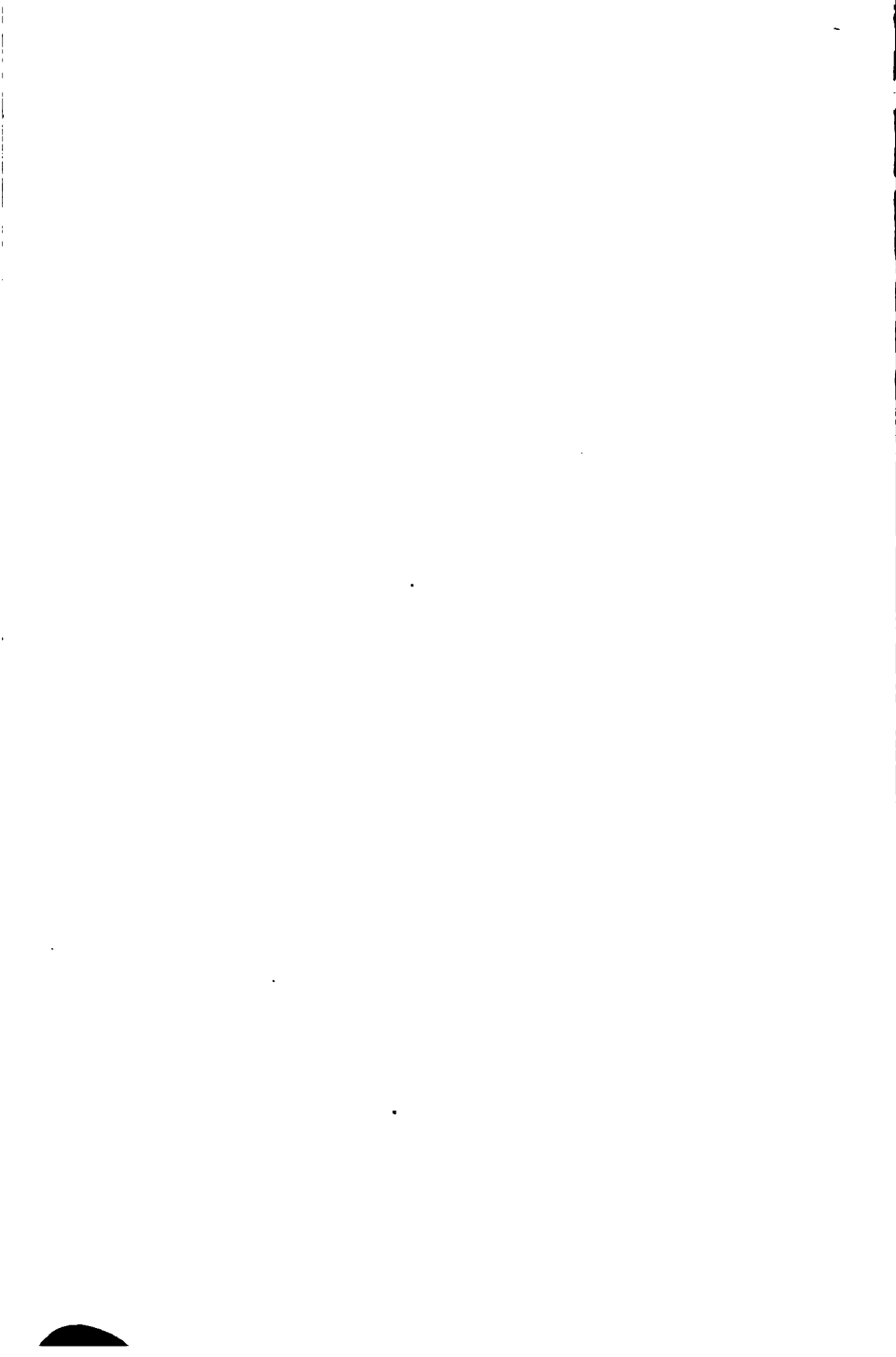
‡ Literally, Priest of the Priests—High Priest.

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

cohesion, and that they have to make their own religion and philosophy the guides that they need. Both have aided them in their social development; both will continue to support them in their new, modernized life in India and abroad; and both will enable them to wait for the final triumph of the Good Principle.

D. MENANT.

## **SIKHISM AND THE SIKHS**



## SIKHISM AND THE SIKHS

SIKHISM, the creed of the brave and hardy race that held dominion over the plain country of the Punjab during the first fifty years of the present century, and disputed the sovereignty of northern India with the English, well deserves the study of those interested in the birth and development of religions. Like some other creeds, it had its origin in a profound dissatisfaction with the existing order of things, and a passionate endeavor on the part of its founder to break the chain which Brahminism had fastened round the feet and hands of every Hindu. Later, under the wholesome stimulus of persecution, it became a fierce and inspiring belief, which changed a nation of peaceful peasants into an army of disciplined warriors, who, guided by a leader of genius, were the most formidable armed force that native India had seen since the days of Aurung-Zeb and Shah Jehan. The revolt of Sikhism against Brahminism resembled that of Protestantism against the Church of Rome, in that it was not a contradiction of dogma, but a resistance to the intolerable pretensions of the priestly class. The doctrines

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

of Luther differed in but few and unimportant particulars from those of the orthodox champions of Catholicism. The theological tangle known as Brahminism would have included the doctrinal subtleties and puerilities of Nanak without difficulty. It was itself a compound of mysticism and realism, tolerant and all-embracing—theistic, polytheistic, and pantheistic at the same time. It allowed to the ignorant worshipper a myriad gods, from the ochre-stained stone in the forest to the awful personages of the Hindu trinity; while to the elect, who had risen beyond symbolism to the purer air, it provided conceptions of the Deity as noble and exalted as those to be found in any religion of East or West. But no creed, however lofty in conception or ethically worthy, is tolerable to free and liberal minds in which the power of interpretation and direction is jealously guarded, as an hereditary right, by a corrupt and prejudiced priesthood. It was against this pretension that the reformers of the West and the East took up arms; and it is a strange coincidence that the teaching of both Luther and Nanak was synchronous, and that they were born and died within a few years of each other.

In this paper all that can be attempted is to show, generally, the line of doctrine expounded by Nanak and his eight successors in the office of Guru, or spiritual leader; secondly, to note the important changes introduced by Govind Singh, the tenth Guru and founder of the church militant of Sikh-

## SIKHISM AND THE SIKHS

ism; and, lastly, to observe the practice of the Sikhs of to-day, and the degree in which they have fallen away from the teaching of both Nanak and Govind and reverted to Hindu ceremonial and modes of thought.

When Nanak, who was born in 1469, began his teaching, Hinduism had long crystallized into the sacerdotal guild which we see in India to-day. It may even be said that its religious aspect was then more lost than now in a multitude of ceremonial observances and social prescriptions; for the influence of missionary and proselyting creeds, like Christianity and Islamism, has been to draw out what is best in Hinduism and encourage cultivated Hindus to reject the material and grosser part of their creed in favor of its higher esoteric teaching. But then, as now, for the uninstructed mass of the people, Brahminism was Hinduism—that is to say, doctrine counted for little or nothing, and the strict observance of the rules of caste, with the Brahmin as the top-stone of the social pyramid, was everything. Caste had been invented by Brahmins for Brahmins; a system by which Hindu society was divided and subdivided by hereditary and impregnable barriers, the Brahmins remaining a sacred priesthood, immeasurably above all others, directing the lives and conduct of all, and without toll to whom none of the ordinary functions of civil life could be effectively performed. The greedy Brahmin demanded his fees at birth and marriage and death, and to feed



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

Brahmins was a virtue far above devotion to mercy, truth, and justice. It was against this privileged hierarchy that Nanak directed his attack; and, although he did not preach the abolition of caste as was subsequently done by Govind Singh, his writings are filled with acknowledgments of the brotherhood and equality of man, and he admitted all classes as his disciples. Nor did his gentle and quietist nature attempt a direct assault on the Brahmin class, other than by the denunciation of the idol worship on the profits of which they lived. He even allowed and approved the use of Brahmins as private and domestic priests, to perform such ceremonial as was unobjectionable; though he rejected their teachings, together with the doctrine of Vedas and Puranas, the Hindu sacred books. Born in the Punjab, where the conflict between Hinduism and Islamism had long continued, he was doubtless influenced, as had been the *bhagats*, or pious teachers, who had preceded him, by the central idea of Mohammedanism, the unity of God; and monotheism was the cardinal truth of his doctrine.

It is necessary to study carefully his gospel, known as the *Adi Granth*, to realize adequately the purity and beauty of Nanak's doctrine. This enormous volume is somewhat repellent to Western scholars. The only form in which it is accessible—for the *Gurmukhi* in which it is written is exceedingly obscure—is the translation of Dr. Ernest Trumpp, a learned German professor, who was

brought to Lahore at a time when I was chief secretary to the Punjab government, to undertake this difficult task, on which he spent seven years' labor. But his command of English was not equal to a rendering of the spirit of the original, and he further appears to have considered the Granth as an incoherent and shallow production, and its chief value to be linguistic, as a treasury of the mediæval Hindu dialects. This judgment appears to me to be mistaken. There are, it is true, many puerilities and vain repetitions, from which the books of no Eastern religion are free; but it is scarcely possible to turn a single page without being struck by the beauty and originality of the images and the enlightened devotion of its language. No Catholic ascetic has ever been more absorbed in the contemplation of the Deity than was the prophet Nanak when giving utterance to his rhapsodies.

The monotheism of Nanak is often not to be distinguished from pantheism; and, unless a creed be provided with a personal and anthropomorphic deity, it is always difficult to draw the line between the two. Sometimes Nanak represents God as a self-conscious spirit protecting the creatures He has made; an ever-present Providence, who can be approached through the Guru, the heaven-appointed teacher, and ready to bless and emancipate the soul which worships sincerely and humbly. At other times, man and the universe and all that exists are but a part of and an emanation from God, who produces all things out of Him-

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

self and to whom all finally return. In the same way, it would seem that Nanak in no way denied the existence of the lower deities of the Hindu mythology; or the poetic pantheism on which his belief in the one supreme God was based could hardly exist without the symbolism which inspired all nature with life, and found a spiritual force behind and within every manifestation of natural energy. Yet all such deities he asserted to be indifferent and unworthy of regard, much as the early preachers of Christianity treated the gods of Greece and Rome, in whose existence they believed, but whose dominion was to be overthrown by Christ. Idolatry he condemned, asserting that the service pleasing to the Deity was that of the heart: neither vain ceremonies nor the austerities which the Hindu ascetics had been wont to consider as the key which unlocked the highest and most secret mysteries, but a pure, unselfish life, a faith in God revealed through the instrumentality of the appointed Guru, or spiritual guide. Charity and good works were commendable and the worthy fruits of an unselfish life; but they were not of themselves sufficient to release the soul from its bondage to sense and illusion, or to save it from transmigration, the ever-present dread of the Hindu, or to insure its reunion with God. These results could only be attained by meditation on God and through the saving grace of His name.

Although Nanak claimed to be a prophet, he did not assert that he was inspired or possessed of

miraculous powers, though these were freely ascribed to him by his disciples, both during his lifetime and after his death. But he magnified his office of Guru into that of an intermediary between man and God, and blind obedience to the Guru was enjoined as an essential article of faith. The Guru's saving power was such that contact with him brought salvation to the most criminal. In short, the virtue of the Guru was supreme; and although Nanak himself claimed no special sanctity, but spoke of himself as an ignorant and sinful man, yet the Gurus who succeeded him, and who possessed more ambition and less piety, were virtually deified by their followers; and the worship of the Guru and the surrender to him of the wealth, the honor, and the life of his followers, became as grievous a burden to the Sikh community as the yoke of the Brahmins had been.

The doctrine of transmigration of souls was common to Sikhism, Hinduism, and Buddhism—the belief in the continued existence of the soul, through countless changes into various forms of animal and human existences, until, by the virtue of the Guru and the saving power of the name of God, final emancipation was attained and absorption into the Supreme, when individuality ended. This practical annihilation, which the loss of individuality signifies to the less subtle fancy of Europeans, was the chief object of the religious strivings of the Sikh or Hindu, and it was the reward of virtue and of faith in God. It was thus from a different

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

standpoint that life and death were regarded by Eastern and Western thinkers. To the former life is a burden from which the soul should seek release in forgetfulness and darkness; to the latter, the idea of a happy immortality, as the reward for a virtuous earthly life, is the one thought which permits life to be borne with cheerfulness and death faced with equanimity. But the troubles and enigmas which have confused and perplexed many Christian communities found their exact counterpart in Sikhism. There was the same conflict between predestination, election, and free will. The sacred name was only communicated by the Guru to him upon whose forehead had been imprinted, from the beginning, the sign which designated him as one of the elect. Destiny was absolute and supreme. Man was represented as a puppet, whom the Master made to dance as it pleased Him. In every breast, goodness, passion, or darkness was predominant, and human actions were necessarily the result of the influence that swayed them. Illusion had been spread around all earthly things; man was deceived by a power above and without him; and he was irresponsible, seeing that the impulse of his conduct was beyond his control. It was hopeless to attempt to reconcile the doctrines of predestination and free will, the choice of good or evil, and a system of rewards and punishments with the fixed decree of an unchanging destiny; and the attempt was probably made in order to account for the inequalities, the sorrow, and suf-

## SIKHISM AND THE SIKHS

fering of human life, the perplexity of which had lain at the root of the Hindu doctrine of the transmigration of souls.

It is not possible here to discuss the dogmas of Sikhism as expounded by Nanak in more detail. He was a true prophet, and accomplished worthily an exalted mission. His system, like all systems, had many imperfections; and chief of them were those which equally belonged to Calvinism, in the substitution of one tyranny for another, and the overshadowing of all human joy by a predestined lot which no faith or virtue could modify. But the good far outweighed the evil. Nanak taught the wisdom and omnipotence of one supreme God, and the equality of all men, of whatever race or creed, in His sight; purity of life, charity, humility, and temperance. He enjoined kindness to animals, and forbade both female infanticide and the burning of widows. He condemned idolatry and asceticism, and preached the wholesome doctrine that the state of the worker and householder was the most honorable condition, and that, to find God and serve Him, it was not necessary to practise austerities or retire from active life. His object, in which he largely succeeded, was to purge Hinduism of the dross which had gathered about it; to lift it from the slough of polytheism and vain ceremonial in which it was choked, and to bring it back to the firm ground and the pure air of the Vedas. His mission, at the close of the fifteenth century, was the same

as that of Raja Lal Mohan Roy and Keshab Chaudar Sen in the nineteenth; but his originality was the greater, for his impulse was not, like theirs, the necessary result of contact with European culture and modes of thought, which are largely and beneficially affecting Hinduism. The missionary teaching of Christianity affects educated Hindus little if at all; but the science and literature of the West are playing an important part in purifying Hinduism of its materialism, and bringing it back to its ancient monotheism, or to that state of suspension of judgment which is somewhat inadequately designated agnosticism.

The successors of Nanak, who held the Guruship from 1538 to 1675 A.D., were of far inferior capacity and disinterestedness, and do not require much mention. It was the fourth Guru, Ram Das, who founded the famous city of Amritsar, and built the Golden Temple in the middle of the Tank of Nectar, thus giving to the Sikh people a centre for worship; while Arjan, the fifth Guru, systematized the theocracy, collected taxes, and assumed something of the state of a secular ruler. His death was due to the tyranny of the Mohammedan government, which then, from its capital of Delhi, ruled the greater part of the Indian peninsula; and from that date, 1606. A.D., commenced an obstinate quarrel between Sikhs and Mohammedans, which continued until, in the general crush of the Mogul Empire, at the beginning of the present century, the former seized supreme

## SIKHISM AND THE SIKHS

power in the Punjab. Nor is the hostility between them at an end at the present day, and the Sikh warriors, in 1857, followed the call of the English to Delhi and Lucknow, to avenge their slaughtered prophets and co-religionists of days long past. The stern measures of repression which the Moslem governors employed against the Sikhs were in some measure justified by the turbulent character of these sectaries who lived by plunder and levied contributions upon all who were not of their persuasion. But the fierceness of their hatred of Mohammedanism and its steady flame were due to the religious bigotry of the Emperor Aurung-Zeb, who considered it a sacred duty to destroy all who would not accept Islam, and whose savage fanaticism hastened the decay of the Mogul power. No creed endures the foundation-stones of which have not been cemented with blood; and the persecutions of Aurung-Zeb only united the Sikhs more closely in resistance to his rule, until at last a man arose among them who possessed spiritual authority and organizing power, and who changed the whole complexion of the Sikh creed. This was Govind Singh, the tenth and last Guru, who, on the martyrdom of his father, became leader of the sect till his death in 1708. The changes introduced by Govind, though fundamental, were not doctrinal. He was, indeed, no quietist like Nanak, but a man of action, animated by the passion of revenge. The monotheistic theory he did not dispute; but his



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

patron saint, so to speak, was the fierce goddess Durga, to whom he is said to have offered a human sacrifice to inaugurate his mission. He formed the Sikhs into a military brotherhood under the name of the Khalsa. He abolished caste altogether, which Nanak had never ventured to do; and, although this offended many of the better classes, it was received with enthusiasm by the lower orders, who flocked to his standard. He instituted an initiatory rite of baptism, known as the *pahul*, a feast of communion, and a distinctive dress to distinguish his disciples from other Hindus. Sikhs were forbidden to cut their hair or beard, to gamble, or to smoke tobacco; but intoxicating liquors were allowed, and the richer classes have always been hard drinkers, though the peasants are temperate enough. No regard was to be paid to Vedas, Shastras, or the Koran, neither to Hindu priests or Mohammedan mullahs; visits to temples and shrines and the observance of Hindu ceremonies at birth, marriage, and death were forbidden. The mild law of Nanak was transformed into a gospel of intolerance and hate, directed not only against his bitter enemies, the Mohammedans, but against the members of all alien creeds and non-conforming Sikh sects, of which several had arisen. But the Mohammedans were the chief objects of Sikh hatred. To salute one of the accursed race was a crime worthy of hell, and the lifelong duty of the Sikh was to slay Mohammedans and wage constant war upon them. The

## SIKHISM AND THE SIKHS

results of this teaching and practice turned the Punjab, for a hundred years, into an arena of bloodshed. Mohammedan conquerors from central Asia and Afghanistan swooped down upon the dying Mogul Empire, and occupied the northern capital, Lahore, and established viceroys and governors. But, with varying fortunes, the conflict with the Sikhs always continued, until it was finally decided by the gradual conquest of the Punjab by Maharaja Runjit Singh.

Of all the men who carved principalities out of the inheritance of the emperors of Delhi, the most remarkable was Runjit Singh. He possessed the genius both of war and of government. The son of the chief of one of the smaller Sikh military confederacies, he attacked and overcame all rivals and competitors of his own faith, and then turned his sword against the Mohammedans, annexing in turn the Afghan provinces of Multan, Kashmir, Peshawur, and the Derajat, which is the name of the long strip of plain country that lies between the Indus and the mountains on the northwestern frontier of Hindostan. In the Afghans he met an enemy equal to the Sikhs in bravery and fanaticism; the contest was for many years undecided, and cost the Maharaja heavily, both in men and treasure. But the discipline and arms of the Sikhs gave Runjit Singh the final advantage; and, at his death in 1839, he was the undisputed ruler of the Punjab and Kashmir.

Those who care to know in more detail my es-

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

timate of Runjit Singh, his character, his mode of government, his counsellors, his army, and his conquests, may find it in his biography, which I wrote in 1892 for the University of Oxford. There is only space here to note the influence of his reign on the religious side of Sikhism. This was partly good and partly evil. The fierce intolerance of Govind Singh was abandoned by the Maharaja for an absolute indifference to religion, further than was necessary to retain the allegiance of the Sikhs and secure the personal adherence of their religious guides, Babas and Bhais, whom he largely subsidized and treated with every outward mark of respect. But in his eyes the creed of his servants mattered nothing, so long as they served him well. Several of his most trusted and capable ministers were Mohammedans, and many were Brahmins, whose employment Govind Singh had distinctly forbidden. The Sikhs, chiefs and people, were plain soldiers, utterly illiterate; and no place could be found for them in a system of government so complicated as that of the Maharaja, where Brahmins and Mohammedans of education, experienced through long generations in all the arts of government, were necessary to the maintenance of his position. Even in the army, the same spirit of tolerance was found. Diwan Mokham Chand, a Khattri Hindu, was probably his best general; and Irish, Italian, and French officers trained and led important divisions of his forces.

This tolerance in matters of religious belief

## SIKHISM AND THE SIKHS

removed the darkest blot from the ferocious creed of Govind, and allowed the Sikhs to enter the community of reasonable and civilized men; for, during the eighteenth century, their hand was against every man, and plunder and slaughter were the law of their being. This reform, selfish though it was in its origin, so modified and elevated the Sikh polity and character that its advantage far outweighed the injury to public decency and morality which may have resulted from the violent and treacherous character of the monarch or the drunkenness and profligacy of his life. Morality is conventional, and conduct must be judged by the standard of the age and the environment of the individual. Maharaja Runjit Singh, in spite of his faults, was a really great monarch, and, like Peter the Great of Russia, who was far more coarse and cruel, he created a state and a nation. The ignorant and brutal Sikh peasants became, by the inspiration of his genius, the most formidable armed force that India had seen during the nineteenth century. Every adult male was a soldier; and, if the religious fervor was not so keen as in the days of Govind Singh, a strong national spirit, almost unknown in India before, had succeeded and supplemented it. Had the great Maharaja lived in other days, the warlike Sikhs, with such a leader and inspired by so high a spirit, might well have founded an empire co-extensive with that of the Moguls. But the time was inauspicious; the Maharaja died prematurely, ex-

hausted by excesses, and the kingdom which he had so laboriously built up collapsed.

It was but a short time after his death, in 1839, that the folly and weakness of his successors brought about a collision with the British power, which, in a hundred years, with the irresistible force and sureness of a rising tide, had spread over Hindostan from Calcutta to the river Sutlej, and in whose advance the Maharaja had clearly foreseen and predicted the overthrow of the Sikh monarchy. During his lifetime he had anxiously and consistently maintained friendship with England, and though at times his ambitious schemes led to friction and complaint, yet the loyal determination of the two governments to preserve peace was effectual. But at his death the powerful army he had perfected, trained, and placed under the command of French and Italian generals of repute, restrained no longer by fear and loyalty, broke into mutiny, seized the supreme power in the state, and at last crossed the frontier and declared war against the British government. The campaign which followed was exceptionally severe and bloody. Never before in India had the English met an enemy so formidable—a disciplined army with weapons equal to their own, and an artillery more numerous and powerful. After a series of hotly contested battles, in which more than once victory was perilously near defeat, the English entered Lahore in triumph, and commenced the experiment, always doubtful and

## SIKHISM AND THE SIKHS

dangerous in the East, of a puppet monarch and a necessarily ineffective control. This sure recipe for disaffection and intrigue brought about a fresh revolt of the Sikh army, which had no desire to beat its swords into ploughshares before it had made another trial of strength with the English. The ensuing campaign, as severe as, but briefer than, the first, was decisive, and the whole of the Punjab was annexed to the British dominions in 1849. The Sikhs, like gallant soldiers, accepted the inevitable without bitterness. Their national sentiment was not outraged by the result of a contest in which they had honorably striven, on almost equal terms, with the power which had successively overthrown all the great military organizations of Hindostan, and which was careful to allow them as free and full expression of Sikh teaching and practice as the Maharaja himself; which willingly enrolled their disbanded soldiers in its own armies, and renewed and confirmed the endowments of their beloved religion. From that day to this the Sikhs have shown themselves the most loyal and devoted subjects of the Queen. When the Bengal army, in 1857, was driven into mutiny by the crass stupidity and criminal carelessness of the military authorities, the Sikh maharajas, chiefs, and people sprang again to arms, and fought with the utmost gallantry by the side of the British, whom they had learned to respect.

Fifty years have passed since the annexation of the Punjab, and it will be interesting to know

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

what kind of men are the Sikhs of to-day; how far civilization and education and orderly government have affected or modified their characteristics, and how the later phase of their religion, as taught by Govind Singh, has fared in the uncongenial atmosphere of peace. I have long lived among the Sikhs, and was chief magistrate of their principal districts of Lahore and Amritsar; and during several years I was officially employed in writing the histories of the independent chiefs and nobles of the Punjab. Indeed, at one time, there was scarcely a single Sikh of position with whom I was not personally acquainted. My experience is that no one can live in intimate relations with the Sikh people, chiefs or peasants, with any other feeling than confidence, respect, and affection. They are a singularly sincere, simple, and warm-hearted race, susceptible to kindness and giving a most loyal service to those whom they trust. This description applies not to Sikhs alone, but to the great agricultural tribe of Jats, from which the Sikhs were mostly drawn, and in which they are often re-absorbed. The Jats are the most important people in the Punjab, and are widely spread from Delhi to the Indus. Nearly connected with the Rajputs in origin, they have many characteristics which separate them from that noble stock, for they are almost universally employed in agriculture, which the Rajputs, as a rule, dislike or despise. But the Jats are the backbone of the revenue-paying population, peaceful, when not ex-

## SIKHISM AND THE SIKHS

cited by fanaticism or oppression, self-restrained, sober, industrious, and independent. Their love of freedom and independence is their most striking characteristic, giving them an open and manly frankness which invites the sympathy of Englishmen, with whom they have so much in common.

The value of the Sikhs as soldiers has an important bearing on the future of the British Empire in the East, not in India alone, but in all other regions in which native troops can be profitably employed; and it is an interesting question to determine how far the modern conditions of the Punjab affect the military qualities of the Sikhs and the adherence of new disciples to the Sikh creed. For it must be remembered that Sikhism is a matter of profession and election, not of hereditary necessity, like the caste system of Brahminism. The baptism of initiation is not ordinarily administered to the sons of a Sikh until they are adult, never before the age of seven years, while to women, except in rare cases, it is not given at all. It will be obvious that there no longer exist the same strong impulse and attraction to Sikhism as in the time of Govind Singh, or still more during the reign of Runjit Singh, when every Sikh was a favored member of a dominant class. The change of tendency was very marked in the first census taken in the Punjab after annexation, when the number of recorded Sikhs was small; though too great stress should not be laid on statistics at such a time, when concealment of creed may



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

have been due to doubt as to the treatment the Sikhs would receive from their new rulers. When it was found that the British bore no animosity towards them, and that, on the contrary, they were anxious to utilize so admirable a fighting race, the numbers who presented themselves for initiation rapidly increased; and, in the five districts where Sikhs most abound, the numbers recorded in 1868 and 1881 were three times as great as in the first census. Other causes assisted to stimulate the religious impulse. The Indian mutiny, during which all Sikh recruits were welcomed to the British army, gave an impetus to the creed, and the *Pax Britannica* which has been observed for so many years within the borders of Hindostan has not prevented the Sikhs from enjoying plenty of fighting in other parts of the world. In Afghanistan and on the northwest frontier, in China and the Soudan, the Sikhs have always been in the van and have covered themselves with glory; while in Burma, Singapore, and Hong-Kong they form an admirable body of military police. Among the fighting races of the world, the Sikhs hold a very high place, nor do I believe that for the highest qualities of soldiers there are any their superiors. Led by British officers, I believe Sikhs to be far better troops, steadier, and more intelligent than the majority of those found in European armies. The Gurkhas are equally good, but of these the number of recruits is limited. The value of the Sikh is increased by his freedom from caste prej-

## SIKHISM AND THE SIKHS

udice, which permits his employment beyond the sea or in conditions where the Brahmin, the Rajput, or the ordinary Hindu would find it impossible to live without incurring social ostracism. The Sikh is as gallant and impetuous in attack as he is imperturbable in defence or reverse. Exceedingly temperate and enduring, the severest hardships are borne cheerfully and without complaint, and he is always ready to risk or sacrifice his life, without a thought, when led by officers who are worthy of him. No praise which can be given to this incomparable soldier is above his deserts. At the same time, it must not be supposed that the Sikhs collectively are such a fighting race as in the days of the great Maharaja. Soon after annexation, the Punjab was disarmed in the interests of public order, and the men who had been accustomed to redress their own wrongs with the sword which hung ever at their side were compelled to carry their complaints to the courts of law, and to find in the discipline of the regular army the safety-valve for their martial enthusiasm. So it happened that a very large number of the Sikhs, peasants and land-holders, gave up their fighting habits, and became again peaceful agriculturists, one or two members of the family taking the *pahul* and joining the army, with the warlike affix of Singh to their name, the others remaining Hindus and not to be distinguished by dress or mode of life from their Jat kinsmen, among whom they lived. But the Sikh fighting quality has in no

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

way deteriorated, although the available quantity has become less.

The religious ardor of the Sikhs, under the discipline of the regular army and the orderly progress of civil life, has become an almost burdensome encumbrance and in no way enhances their value as soldiers. Its decline is only to be regretted in that it diminishes the number of recruits to the military caste, for the Hindu Jat peasant, although equally stanch with the Sikh, has not the same inclination to warlike pursuits and prefers to cultivate his ancestral fields. Day by day, the new faith of Govind loses its hold over the people, and the old creed of Hinduism, with its Brahminical sacerdotalism and its worship of strange gods, is taking its place. The Sikh still, from time to time, visits the temple to listen to the reading of the Granth; he abstains from tobacco and leaves his hair and beard unshorn, while his observance of caste restrictions is lax, and he is content to take food from even the hands of a Mohammedan. But the Brahmin has now again become an object of reverence and is called to officiate at births and marriages; the men, and especially the women, always most superstitious and most ready to accept priestly control, visit the idol temples and local shrines; and, in those districts of the Punjab most distant from the religious centre there is little to distinguish the Sikh of to-day from the ordinary Hindu. This laxity in faith gave rise, some thirty years ago, to a move-

## SIKHISM AND THE SIKHS

ment which caused some anxiety to the government, when a carpenter, named Ram Singh, founded a new sect, the Kukas, and attempted to draw his co-religionists back into the path of orthodoxy. He preached Govind Singh as the only true Guru, and insisted upon the abolition of caste, abstinence from animal food, tobacco, and intoxicating liquors, free intermarriage and the neglect of Hindu priests and temples with all their idolatrous symbolism. So long as the Kuka teaching only aimed at religious reform, the government did not interfere, although respectable citizens were scandalized at the debauchery which prevailed in the Kuka mixed assemblies. But when, like Govind Singh, they changed religion into a political propaganda, proclaimed the restoration of the Khalsa and the overthrow of the British government, and proceeded to insurrection and murder, the sect was suppressed with a heavy hand; the leaders, arrested in one night throughout the province, were deported to Burma, Aden, and the Andamans, and the Kuka revival, after a short time, was heard of no more. But, although religious fanaticism always contains the germs of possible danger, it is a matter of regret that Sikhism, which, as taught by its first prophet Nanak, was so full of promise, and was inspired by a pure morality and a high conception of the Deity, should fall back again into the idolatrous materialism from which for a time he had raised it. But the recuperative and absorbing power of Brahminism is very great. History



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

records how it overthrew and expelled the creed of Buddhism from Hindostan, and it seems about to repeat the process with Sikhism.

For the British government of India it is desirable, so far as may be practicable, to stimulate and encourage the life and growth of a martial spirit in the fighting races of India. They form an invaluable reserve of military power, which may be counted upon with confidence so long as the administration is popular and commends itself to the conscience of the people as just and beneficent. But it is difficult to take any steps which might seem to favor a sentiment so closely interwoven with religious principle and practice, when the declared basis of British policy is a strict religious neutrality. This has not, it is true, prevented the continuance of ancient endowments to the temples and shrines of the Sikh, Hindu, and Mohammedan religions; but the tendency has been to reduce and terminate these wherever possible, and to withdraw from the state the management of all religious institutions. The endowments of the Golden Temple at Amritsar are now but scanty, and it has lost in great part the rich offerings which were made freely by rajas and maharajas when they paid their annual visits to the shrine around which their bungalows, or hostels, still stand. The policy of the old East India Company was more sympathetic and encouraged the endowment of the several religions of India—a practice to be logically defended on the ground that the

## SIKHISM AND THE SIKHS

people who paid the taxes and furnished the state revenue should have a portion thereof devoted to the maintenance of the public worship of the national creeds, such as Brahminism, Mohammedanism, and Sikhism. But, as the tendency of higher statesmanship grows more agnostic, the less does it seem able or disposed to oppose the pressure of an aggressive proselytizing spirit, which seems to grow in fervor with the absence of resistance; which has caused serious evil in China, which threatens trouble in the Soudan, and which will be the cause of future danger throughout the Eastern world. There can be little doubt that a purely secular education is, for the great mass of the people, inconsistent with the highest realization of the duties of citizenship, and that ethical teaching cannot be altogether divorced from religious sanctions. All the scientific and philosophical religions have a satisfactory ethical basis, and a government like that of India, which professes to evenly hold the balance between competing creeds, and which has solemnly promised to abstain from pressing Christianity upon its Indian subjects, should endeavor, by the liberal, judicious, and impartial endowment of all religions accepted by large sections of the community, to conciliate the priestly class, which now stands aloof, unfriendly or hostile, and thus promote not only loyalty to the ruling power, but the growth of a higher morality which finds no sufficient sustenance in the dry and barren teaching of Western literature and science.

LEPEL GRIFFIN.



POSITIVISM: ITS POSITION,  
AIMS, AND IDEALS





## POSITIVISM: ITS POSITION, AIMS, AND IDEALS

POSITIVISM is at once a philosophy, a polity, and a religion—all three harmonized by the idea of a supreme humanity, all three concentrated on the good and progress of humanity. This combination of man's whole thought, general activity, and profound feeling in one dominant synthesis is the strength of Positivism, and at the same time an impediment to its rapid growth. The very nature of the Positivist scheme excludes the idea of wholesale conversion to its system, or of any sudden increase of its adherents. No philosophy before, no polity, no religion was ever so weighted and conditioned. Each stood alone on its special merit. Positivism only has sought to blend into coherent unity the three great forces of human life.

In the whole history of the human mind, no philosophy ever came bound up with a complete scheme of social organization, and also with a complete scheme of religious observance. Again, the history of religion presents no instance of a

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

faith which was bound up with a vast scientific education, and also with a set of social institutions and political principles. Hitherto, all philosophies have been content to address man's reason and to deal with his knowledge, leaving politics, morality, industry, war, and worship open questions for other powers to decide. So, too, every religion has appealed directly to the emotions or the imagination, but has stood (sublimely) above terrestrial things and the passing cares of men. A mere philosophical idea, like evolution, can sweep across the trained world in a generation, and is accepted by the masses when men of learning are agreed. A practical movement, such as reform, self-government, socialism, or empire, catches hold of thousands by offering immediate material profit. Men of any creed, of any opinion, can join in the definite point. This has given vogue to so many systems of thought, so many political nostrums, such a variety of religious revivals. It has also been the cause of their ultimate failure, however great their temporary success. They have been one-sided, partial, mutually destructive. A religion which ignores science finds itself at last undermined and discredited by facts. A polity which has no root in history and in the science of human nature ends in confusion, like the Social Contract or the Rights of Man.

✕ And a philosophy which is too lofty to teach men how to live, or what to worship, is flung aside by the passions, emotions, interests of busy men.

## POSITIVISM

Positivism insists that the cause of all these failures has been the attempt to treat human nature in sections and by special movements, whereas human nature is an organic whole and can only be treated as an organism of infinite cohesion. Positivism is the first attempt to appeal to human nature *synthetically*—that is, to regard man as equally a logical being, a practical being, and a religious being, so that his thought, his energy, his devotion may all coincide in the same object. The Christian preacher may cry aloud that this object is God and salvation. But when he is asked to explain the relation of salvation to conic sections or to home rule, his answers are vague. The agnostic philosopher, again, assures us that this centre of thought is evolution; but how the devout soul is to worship evolution, or how the workman is to better his lot by evolution, are problems which the agnostic philosopher finds troublesome and idle. The radical reformer insists on a brand-new set of institutions, and trusts that men's beliefs, habits, desires, yearnings, and religions will soon settle themselves. But this is the last thing they ever do. Hitherto all philosophies, all polities, all religions have sought to treat human nature as a quack who should treat a sick man on the assumption that he had no brain, or that his nerves were of steel, or that his stomach was to be ignored. They have had successes, as nostrums do have. The Positive synthesis, for the first time, provides the harmony for thought,

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

activity, and feeling. But, since almost the whole of our real knowledge is limited to this planet, and certainly the whole of what we can do is so limited, and since our best aspirations and ideals are human (or, at least, anthropomorphic), it follows that any true synthesis of human nature as a whole must centre in humanity. That is the key to the power of Positivism, and also to its very gradual advance.

That which is nothing unless it be comprehensive, systematic, synthetic, naturally finds arrayed against it the popular currents of the hour. There never was an age so deeply intoxicated with specialism in all its forms as our own, so loftily abhorrent of anything systematic, so alien to *synthesis*—that is, organic co-ordination of related factors. Everything nowadays is treated in infinitesimal subdivisions. Each biologist sticks to his own microbe; each historian to his own "period"; the practical man leaves "ideas" to the doctrinaire, and the divine leaves it to the dead worldling to bury his dead in his own fashion. Specialism is erected into a philosophy, a creed, a moral duty, an intellectual antiseptic. It is this dispersive habit which makes our art so mechanical, our religion so superficial, our philosophy so unstable, and our politics so chaotic. A movement, of which the first aim is to stem the torrent of this dispersiveness, naturally finds welcome only with those whom our moral, material, and mental anarchy has profoundly saddened and alarmed.

## POSITIVISM

Positivism, then, so far as it is a religion, does not seek to be accepted on impulse, or by rapture, under a gush of devotional excitement. When Peter preached, "Repent and be baptized, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost!" the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. But Saint Peter cared little for science or philosophy, and even less for politics and art. Positivism asks to be accepted as the result of a great body of convergent convictions, or not to be accepted at all. Being a religion, it is not a thing to be decided by the authority of the learned. Every brain must reason it out for itself; every heart must feel its enthusiasm; every character must resolve to live and die by it in daily life. It is not like a political movement which aims at forming a party, a militant league, or a revolution. It never appeals to the instinct of combat; it inflames no passion of self-interest; it panders not to the spirit of destruction, to the spirit of equality, or the love of mockery and satire. It offers nothing immediate, no panacea to make every one blissful, or rich, or wise. It insists that all reforms must be gradual, complicated, spiritual, and moral, not material and legislative. It discourages all immediate and direct remedies for social and political maladies, and ever preaches the humble and difficult method of progress by mental education and moral regeneration. Now, those reformers who are ready to sacrifice all their impatient hopes, all royal roads to the millennium, all revolutionary dreams

*necrosis of  
armed*

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

for establishing Utopia, such spirits are few and rare.

The problem before Positivism is threefold, each side being practically equal in importance and also in difficulty. It seeks to transfer religion from a supernatural to a scientific basis, from a theological to a human creed; to substitute in philosophy a relative anthropocentric synthesis for an absolute, cosmical analysis; to subordinate politics, both national and international, to morality and religion. No doubt, in these three tasks the religion is the dominant element. The change in its meaning and scope is the most crucial in the history of human civilization. The change involves two aspects, at first sight incompatible and even contradictory. The one involves the surrender of the supernatural and theological mode of thought; the other is the revival, or rather the amplification, of the religious tone of mind.

Positivism, thus, with one hand, has to carry to its furthest limits that abandonment of the supernatural and theological field which marks the last hundred years of modern thought, and yet, with the other hand, it has to stem the tide of materialism and anti-religious passion, and to assert for religion a far larger part than it ever had, even in the ages of theocracy and sacerdotalism. The vulgar taunt that Positivism is anti-religious arises from ignorance. The constant complaint of Positivism is that religion, in all its neo-Christian phases, has shrunk into a barren formula. The

## POSITIVISM

essence of Positivism is to make religion permeate every human action, thought, and emotion. And the idea of humanity alone can do this. Deity cannot say, "*Nihil humani a me alienum.*" Humanity can and does say this; whereas, in logic, the formula of theology—the formula in which it glories—is "*Omne humanum a me alienum.*" Omnipotence, as such, can have no concern with the binomial theorem, or a comedy of Molière, or female suffrage, or old-age pensions, or a Wagner opera—that is, with ninety-nine parts of human life and interest. The result is that theological religion has less and less to do with human life. If religion is ever to be supreme, it must be anthropocentric.

But, on the other hand, an age so ardently materialist and scientific as our own is antipathetic to the idea of religion presuming to interfere at all. The ordinary agnostic or skeptic, if he abstains in public from Voltairean mockery, systematically treats religion, even the religious tendency or tone of mind, as an amiable weakness and negligible quantity. He is little concerned to attack it, for he finds it every day more willing to get out of his way, and to wrap itself up in transcendental generalities. This is the temper which Positivism has to subdue. But it finds the scientific and positive minds scandalized at the suggestion of any revival of religion, while the religious world is scandalized by the repudiation of theology. A movement having aims apparently so little recon-

help



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

cilable can only find prepared minds here and there to accept it. Yet its strength lies in this: it is the only possible reconciliation of two indestructible tendencies, equally deep-rooted in the human mind—the craving for the assurance of demonstrable realities, and the craving for faith and devotion as the supreme control of human life.

This summary sketch of the Positivist synthesis of thought, feeling, and life is not intended as any explanation of it—an elaborate volume could not give room for that—but as a mere preliminary to dealing with the question I am asked to answer: What are the present position, aims, and expectations of Positivism?

Well! Auguste Comte, the founder of Positivism, a professor at the École Polytechnique, died in Paris about forty-three years ago, having put forth his system of philosophy about sixty years ago, and having completed his system of polity and religion about forty-five years ago. There are now organized bodies of men, holding and teaching these ideas, in most of the parts of Europe and also of the transatlantic continent. Speaking for England, for which only I am entitled to speak, the English groups, not very numerous bodies in London and in five or six principal towns, prefer to present the Positivist synthesis in somewhat different aspects, but do not disagree in any essential principle. Some of these groups choose to insist on the strictly religious side of the Positivist scheme, regarding it as a church in the ordi-

## POSITIVISM

nary sense of the term, and attempting to put into ceremonial practice the cult described in the fourth volume of Comte's *Politique*. : This neither Comte himself ever did, nor has his direct successor and principal disciple done so, nor have Comte's own personal friends in France. Without passing any opinion upon the ultimate realization of what, for my own part, I regard as a striking and interesting Utopia, neither I nor my colleagues in the English Positivist Committee have felt either the time to be ripe for any such undertaking nor the development of our movement to be adequate to make any attempt of the kind practical or serious. The attempt has led in South America to some farcical egotism, and the experiment elsewhere has led to no encouraging result. Personally, I have no wish to see the pontifical method carried any further, and it has little interest for me.

For my own part, from the formation by Comte's successor in Paris of the English Positivist Committee, of which I have been president for twenty years, I have always opposed everything that could tend to form "a sect." By "sect," I mean the Pharisaical separation of a body of persons from their fellow-citizens, valuing themselves on certain special observances and living an exclusive life of their own. All this is to us so abhorrent that we would rather run the risk of becoming too easy than of becoming narrow sectaries. Accordingly, we have been, from the first, of the world and in the world around us; having no shibboleths, no

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

creeds, no tests of orthodoxy, not even any roll of membership. We have always been ready to work with all humane movements of a kindred sort. We have no priests, no recognized form of worship, no ritual, and no special canon of adhesion. They who choose to come among us to follow our lectures or to discuss our views are welcome to come. Those who help on the work, by labor or by gifts in money or in kind, are of us and with us, so long as it pleases them to continue such co-operation.

Everything about our work is voluntary, gratuitous, open. Newton Hall is, first and foremost, a free school; on its notices is written: "All meetings and lectures free." Nothing is paid to those who lecture, or demanded from those who attend. No questions are asked, no collection is made, no seats are paid for or reserved. Those who choose to subscribe can do so, without giving any pledge, and withdraw when they choose to withdraw. Lectures in science, in history, in languages, in art, even musical training and classical concerts, have all been free and public. And tens of thousands of men and women have been present from time to time who would decline to call themselves Positivists, and who might at the time feel little more than sympathy and interest. The aim of our body has been to form a school of thought, not to found a sect; to influence current opinion, not to enroll members of a party; to uphold an ideal of religion which should rest on positive science while permeating active life. It is an idle question to ask,

## POSITIVISM

“What are the numbers, or the machinery, of such a body?”

Newton Hall, opposite the Public Record Office, in London, has now been open nearly twenty years. It was so named because it stands on the ground purchased for the Royal Society by Sir Isaac Newton, its president, in 1710; and, during the eighteenth century, the Hall, built thereon by the Royal Society for its collections, contained the first nucleus of the British Museum. There public, free lectures on Positivist philosophy, science, morality, and religion have been carried on continually during autumn, winter, and spring, together with classes for the study of mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, history, languages, and music. The greater names in the Positivist Calendar of 558 Worthies of all ages and nations have been commemorated on special centenaries, those of musicians by appropriate musical pieces. In the summer months, these lectures have been extended in the form of pilgrimages to the birthplace, tomb, or residence of the illustrious dead, and lectures at the public museums, galleries, and ancient monuments. In connection with Newton Hall, there have been social parties, libraries, and guilds of young men and young women. So far, the work of the Positivist body in London has been that of a free school and people's institute.

It may be asked, in what way does such a free school differ from many other similar institutions? The answer is in the fact that the entire scheme

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

of education given in Newton Hall is *synthetic* and *organic*—concentrated on the propaganda of the Positive Philosophy and the Religion of Humanity. Leaving it to other movements to promote miscellaneous information and promiscuous culture of a general kind, the aim of all Positivist teaching is to inculcate the cardinal doctrines of the Positive belief, the central principles of Positive morality, and the vital sense of the Human Religion. In the first report issued from Newton Hall, for 1881, we said :

“ The very existence of Positivism as a scientific system of belief depends on the institution of a complete course of education and the formation of an adequate body of competent teachers. There is, on Positive principles, no road to stable religious convictions except by the way of knowledge of real things ; and there is no royal road to real knowledge other than the teaching of competent instructors and the systematic study of science in the widest sense. One of the purposes for which Newton Hall has been opened is to offer free popular training in the essential elements of scientific knowledge. Our plan is but one of the many attempts around us to found a People’s School. It differs from almost all of these in the following things :

“ 1. It will be, on principle, strictly free ; no teacher being paid, and no fee being received.

“ 2. The education aimed at, not being either professional or literary, will follow the scheme of scientific instruction laid down for the future by Auguste Comte.

“ 3. While having no theological or metaphysical element, the entire course of study will aim at a religious—that is, a social purpose, as enabling us to effect our due service to the cause of humanity, by understanding the laws which regulate the world and our own material and moral being.”

In pursuance of this scheme of education, courses of lectures have been given by graduates of the

## POSITIVISM

universities, most of them having been professors, examiners, and lecturers in various sciences, arts, or history. The courses have been followed, in many cases, during the whole of that period, and many of the students have obtained a solid general education, especially in the various branches of history, biography, and political philosophy. It is not pretended that this has been done by any large numbers. Other institutions of the kind have enjoyed much greater resources and have attracted far more numerous attendants. The reason is obvious. For one man who has the patience or the thoughtfulness to put himself under the curriculum of a laborious training, for the sole end of obtaining an intellectual and moral guidance in a definite system, there are always ninety-nine who are ready to pick up any desultory, entertaining, or marketable knowledge which may be offered to them without too much mental discipline or any distinctive labels. To enter a Positivist hall, much less to join a Positivist class, or to subscribe to a Positivist fund, requires, in these days of prejudice and lampooning, a certain mental detachment and a real moral courage. The direct object of our courses is to inculcate Positive convictions with a view to a Positivist life. And as the public which is prepared to accept these terms is as yet not numerous, our hearers must be rather described as "fit, though few."

If the formation of coherent Positivist convictions by a scientific education be the first task of

# GREAT BELIEFS OF THE WORLD

is far from being the sole task. Whether political, economic, or moral judgment is a cardinal principle in all places and at all times. For forty years English positivists have supported the just claims of the oppressed of capitalism, the oppressed of the people to full incorporation in the state, and the right of the people to the use and improvement of the land. They have maintained the right of the people to be recognized as the basis of the state; they have produced a series of unjust wars and the consequent deaths of British imperialism to crush the independence of one after another. All this was done thirty years ago, the founders of the Positivist group in England began to take action in behalf of the organized trades unions. In 1860 the Positivist Society appealed to Mr. John Bright, M. P., to support the cause of the Transvaal Republic. In 1881 they appealed to the government to recognize the independence of the Transvaal Republic. They were the first to insist on the same principle of justice and honor. They have been an unjust annexation or a partition of Europe, Asia or Africa within the last thirty years when the Positivist body has not failed to voice its plea for morality and justice, and its opposition to the popular cry for empire and malignancy.

## POSITIVISM

nant sneers at "Little Englandism." The record of these efforts may be seen in the *Essays* of Dr. R. Congreve, the first to form a Positivist body in England; in the *Positivist Comments on Public Affairs*, 1878-92; and, from 1893 to 1900, in the eight volumes of the *Positivist Review*. In an article in the *Positivist Comments* I wrote:

"The Positivist Society has no reason to shrink from a review of its policy over this period under five different administrations. It is a policy independent of party: national, patriotic, and devoid of any petty or factious criticism. Its sole aim is to plead for the real honor and good of England, in the interest of peace, the harmony of nations, respect for other races, religions, and honorable ambitions, and mainly for the cause of general civilization."

These *Comments* over fourteen years, I said:

"Embody a coherent and systematic policy dealing with England's international relations as a whole, and weighing the ultimate and indirect effect of each proposed action as affecting the peace of the world and the true cause of civilization. It is not a policy of peace-at-any-price, nor of a little-England, nor of uninstructed sentiment, nor of any prejudice of creed or race, much less of party, of democratic faction, or mischief-making. It is a policy that considers the *past*, and still more the *future*, and not merely the *present*—a policy that respects the rights and dignity of other nations as much as our own." \*

Of course, such a policy as this, publicly pursued in times of intense social and political excitement, could not fail to strain the cohesion of the Positivist propaganda and to limit its progress.

\* *Positivist Review*, vol. iv., p. 73.



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

Bound by our most sacred principles to uphold definite views of national and international morality, we could not fail to encounter the prejudices of party, of class, of race, of patriotism, in their hours of keenest heat. Though resolutely abstaining from any party entanglement and from any criticism of practical applications of principle, it was in the last degree difficult to prevent some divergences of view, and impossible not to drive away thousands of those who were otherwise disposed to join. No system of thought, no economic scheme, certainly no religious movement, ever had to meet such inherent obstacles to acceptance. A philosophy appeals to thought, but it does not meddle with angry political debates. The social reformer has his own difficulties, but he does not rouse up the passions of politicians, party, and journalism. The religious reformer renders unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and is absorbed in the higher interests of the soul and its salvation. But Positivism, because it is a polity, as much as it is a philosophy and a religion, is continually forced to face the most angry storms of popular delirium and of political passion. And never so much as to-day.

Lastly, the distinctive aim of Positivism is to promulgate the conception of a real religion based on positive science. No religion can be stable or dominant if it rests on hypotheses and aspirations, which are necessarily dreamy and in constant flux. If religion, in our age of realities, is to be based on acknowledged proofs, its object must be

## POSITIVISM

earthly and human. The supreme power, dominant on earth and over man, of which we have scientific knowledge is Humanity. And the ideal of Positivism is gradually to form the sense of a religion of Humanity.

And this is, also, the main difficulty that Positivism has to overcome. Denouncing, as it does, the insolent folly of atheism, and also the arid nullity of agnosticism, it is yet difficult to convince the religious minded that Positivism can be anything but a new attack on Christianity and on theism. Comte said: "The atheist is the most irrational of all theologians, for he gives the least admissible answer to the insoluble problem of the universe." Neither in open controversy, nor in private meditation, does the true Positivist hold the belief that the Infinite All came about by chance or made itself. But the orthodox controversialist perversely confounds him with those who do hold the atheistic creed, and this becomes the source of rooted antipathy and prejudice. The Positivist neither denies creation with the atheist, nor is he satisfied, with the agnostic, to boast that he knows nothing as to the religious problem. He simply says that, whatever higher paths may yet be known, the historic conception of Humanity and its practical providence offers all the essential elements of a religious faith.

This does not satisfy the theist, and the forms of theism are infinitely vague, indefinite, mystical, or even verbal, almost as numerous as the

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

individual theists. A well-known man of letters thus summed up his creed: "He fancied there was a sort of a something!" Any of us might say that, and not find it a working religion. It is the very definiteness, the undeniable reality of Humanity, its close touch upon every phase of human life, that repels so many anxious wanderers in the limitless wilderness of theology. In these days of shallow spiritualism, the weaker brethren will cling to anything that is cloudy, unintelligible, transcendental. And their practical gods are Mammon and Moloch.

Much less is Positivism an attack on Christianity. It is the rational development of Christianity, its incorporation with science and philosophy. Not, certainly, with the miraculous and supernatural dogmas of Christendom, but with the humanity of the gospel in its spiritual ideal, and the moral and social ideals of the Christian churches. No doubt, the Christian ideal is but a fractional part of the Positivist ideal, just as the Christian ideal is only in touch with a fractional part of human nature and man's life on earth. But so far as this Christian ideal is honestly human and essentially permanent Positivism is destined to give it a vast development. But this is not enough for those who still hanker after the Athanasian Creed or the Westminster Confession, or even some more inscrutable label.

The human type of religion must radically differ from the theological type, for it can have nothing

## POSITIVISM

of the violent, ecstatic, sensational character which is inherent in monotheism. Positivism is an adult and mature phase of religion, primarily addressed to adults, to men and women of formed character and trained understanding. It is a manly and womanly religion, full of manly and womanly associations and duties. Hence, it must grow gradually, work equally, and be marked by endurance, reserve, good sense, completeness, more than by passion, fanaticism, and ecstatic self-abandonment. When they ask us, Where are the tremendous sanctions, spasmodic beatitudes, penances, raptures, beatific visions, and transcendent mysteries of Christianity? we can only smile. These things belong to the childhood of man, the fairy tale of religion. The "customs" of Dahomey, the sacrifices of polytheism and Mosaism disgust the maturity of man. And so Christianity will never satisfy the later ages of civilization, until it is rational from top to bottom, co-extensive with human life, and in close touch with our latest culture and all forms of healthy manliness and womanliness. Religion is not to be forever nourished by mere hysterical emotions and vague yearnings for what we cannot rationally conceive.

Religion, so reconstituted, will lose much of its rapturous and ecstatic character. It will gain in solidity, constancy, and breadth. Instead of being a thing of transcendental hopes and fears, stimulated on Sundays and occasional moments, but laid

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

aside, if not doubted, for the rest of man's active time, religion will be a body of scientific convictions, poetic emotions, and moral habits, in close relation with all our thoughts, acts, and feelings, and naturally applying to everything we do or desire or think. It will be part of the citizen's daily life: more social than personal, more civic than domestic, more practical than mystical. It will give ample scope to the personal, the domestic, even the mystical side of human nature, within the control of reason and the claims of active duty. Religion will thus mean the guidance of right living by the light of personal and social duty as taught by a systematic sociology. Its creed will be a synthetic philosophy, resting on the general body of positive science. And its worship will be the expression of loyalty to Humanity in all its phases, as manifested in its true servants, the known or the unknown, the living or the dead, of all ages and of every race.

FREDERIC HARRISON.

# **BĀBISM**



## BĀBISM

THE general reader's knowledge of Persia and things Persian is usually limited to the bare facts that the country is ruled by a Shah, and that in times past it has produced one or two poets. Some know that Mohammedanism is there the prevalent religion; but beyond such knowledge few have penetrated. Considering, then, the limitations of our general knowledge on the subject of Persia, it is a matter of small wonder that a religious movement in that country, however great its magnitude, and however far-reaching its consequences, should escape the attention of the Western world.

In the present article we have to deal with no mere religious reformation, but with the foundation and rise, in the middle of the nineteenth century, of a new faith. In its early history, as we shall see, it has much in common with Christianity, as also in the matter of doctrine, emphasizing, as it does, the brotherhood of man, and aspiring to a universal reign of peace, love, freedom, and unity of belief.

In tracing the origin and rise of any religion whatsoever, it is, where possible, fitting to examine



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

the religion or religions which have been in vogue at its birth; for these have, of necessity, always served as a starting-point for a new dispensation. Thus, for example, for the proper understanding of Mohammedanism, it is Judaism (not of the Torah, but of the Talmud), Christianity (chiefly of the Apocryphal Gospels) and Sabæanism which we must study. In the case of Bābism, we must examine Mohammedanism from the Shiite standpoint, and beyond this a movement known as Shaykhism, which, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, grew out of the Shiite faith. In order, however, fully to appreciate the exact position of Shaykhism, and in its turn of Bābism, in their relation to Islam, it will be fitting to explain, in as few words as possible, the main points of divergence between Shiism, the state religion of Persia, and Sunnism, or orthodox Mohammedanism, as practised in Turkey, Egypt, India, and elsewhere. The divergences in teaching which divide these two factions are more sharply indicated than those which separate Protestants from Roman Catholics, and their mutual hostility is also greater. The principal difference, as is well known, lies in the recognition, or otherwise, of all the early successors of Mohammed as vicars of God on earth. The Sunnis recognize the claims of the first four Caliphs, Abu Bakr, Omar, Othman, and Ali, while the Shiites maintain that Ali and his descendants were the only lawful successors. The Omayyad Caliphs and their successors, the Abbassids, are

duly cursed by the Shiites, not merely as usurpers, but even more vehemently for having put to death or persecuted as many as they could of the house of Ali. Thus there arose two rival dynasties—the Caliphs of the Sunni faction and the Imams of the Shiite; the former claiming both temporal and spiritual power over the Sunni church, while the Imams are revered as saints, and even worshipped by the Shiites. According to the orthodox Shiites, there were twelve Imams, of whom eleven lived and died on earth; whereas the twelfth, who is known as the Imam Mahdi, disappeared and remains hidden until such time as he shall reappear and inaugurate the millennium. The person of this Imam was, from the first, enveloped in mystery. According to Shiite belief, he disappeared from the eyes of men in the year 940 A.D., and retired to the mysterious city of Jabulka, where he still lives. At first, he continued to communicate with the faithful through the medium of certain chosen persons, who were known by the name of Bāb or Gate. Of these Bābs, there were four in succession, and the period during which they acted as the temporary guides of the faithful is known as the “Lesser Occultation.” On the death of the fourth Bāb, this apostolic succession came to an abrupt end, and thus began the period known as the “Greater Occultation.”

In the course of centuries, many various sects and schools had grown out of the Shiite creed, and among these was Shaykhism, which originat-

ed early in the nineteenth century in the teaching of a certain Ahmed Ahsai. Space will not permit us to enter into the details of his teaching. Suffice it to say that it was characterized, first, by a reverence for the Imams which in intensity surpassed that of the most devout Shiites; and, secondly, by a doctrine known as that of the "Fourth Support," which maintained that there must always be among the Shiites some "perfect man," capable of serving as a channel of grace between the Hidden Imam and his church. Shaykh Ahmed was succeeded at his death by Hajji Sayyid Kazim, who held largely attended conferences at Kerbela, the principal place of veneration and object of pilgrimage of the Shiites. Now, among those who attended the lectures of Sayyid Kazim was a young man of Shiraz, named Mirza Ali Mohammad, who, though very reserved in manner, attracted the attention of his teacher by his earnestness and grave demeanor. Born of a good family, he had apparently enjoyed the advantages of a distinguished education; he showed a great predilection for the occult sciences, the philosophic theory of numbers, and the like. He, furthermore, had opportunities of intercourse with the Jews of Shiraz, and through Protestant missionary translations he became acquainted with the Gospels. He was strikingly handsome, and his charms of speech and manner were, it appears from all accounts, irresistible. At the age of twenty-two he married; and by his marriage had one son, who

died in infancy. He was at this period settled in business at Bushire; and, from that port of the Persian Gulf, he went to Kerbela and attended, as we have said, the conferences of Sayyid Kazim. Here he remained for a few months, and then departed as suddenly as he had come, returning to Shiraz. Not long after this, Sayyid Kazim died, without, however, nominating a successor; and this fact, as will be seen, is of the utmost importance in the history of the Bāb.

Shortly after Sayyid Kazim's death, a certain Mulla Husayn of Bushrawayh, who had attended the Sayyid's lectures at the same time as Mirza Ali Mohammad, came to Shiraz, and, as was only natural, took that opportunity of visiting his former fellow-student. The two at once fell to talking of the death of their lamented teacher, and referred to the strange words he had spoken as death was approaching: "Do you not desire that I should go, so that the truth may become manifest?" though he gave no hint of the manner in which the truth should be revealed. At this point in the conversation, Mirza Ali Mohammad, to the utter amazement of his friend, suddenly declared that he himself was the promised guide, the new intermediary between the Hidden Imam and the faithful; in short, that he was the Bāb, or "Gate," through which men might communicate with the Imam Mahdi. Mulla Husayn, though at first inclined to doubt, soon came to believe in the truth of this declaration with a faith that thenceforth

remained unshaken. This manifestation and conversion of the first disciple took place on May 23, 1844, almost exactly one thousand years after the "Lesser Occultation." Mulla Husayn at once began to spread the "good news" among the followers of Sayyid Kazim, many of whom immediately set out for Shiraz, so that very soon was gathered round the Bāb a devoted band of believers, which included, besides the followers of Sayyid Kazim, others who were attracted by the new faith. The various kinds of persons who were thus attracted may be summed up as follows :

1. The Shaykhis.
2. Shiites, who believed that the Bāb's teaching was the fulfilling of the Koran.
3. Men who saw in it a hope of national reform.
4. Sufis and mystics.

To these four classes we may add to-day :

5. Those to whom the life and teaching of the Bāb and Beha appeal in a general way ; and among these must be numbered those Western converts who do not fall under the next head.

6. Those who regard Bābism as a fulfilment of Christianity.

At this period the Bāb had already written several works, and these were now eagerly perused by his disciples, who, from time to time, were also "privileged to listen to the words of the master himself, as he depicted in vivid language the worldliness and immorality of the Mullas, or Moham-medan clergy, and the injustice and rapacity of

## BĀBISM

the civil authorities," and the like. He further prophesied that better days were at hand. At this time, however, he did not openly attack Islam.

Thus do we find Mirza Ali Mohammad in the first stage of his mission, setting forth claims to be the Bāb, or channel of grace between the Imam Mahdi and his church, and inveighing against the corruptions of the clergy and the government, by whom he naturally came to be regarded with suspicion and dislike. Not long after his manifestation, when his fame had already spread throughout the country, he set out to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca. It was probably in the Holy City itself that he, once and for all, freed himself from the prophet's faith, and conceived the thought of "ruining this faith, in order to establish in its place something altogether differing from it." He returned from Mecca in August, 1845, possessed of more definite aims and ideals with regard to his own mission. Meanwhile, the clergy and the government had determined that the movement was dangerous, and that it bade fair to become more so. Active measures must, therefore, be taken for its suppression, while this was yet an easy matter. Several of the Bāb's disciples were, accordingly, seized in Shiraz, and, having been bastinadoed, they were warned to desist from preaching. On landing in Bushire, the Bāb was arrested and brought to Shiraz, where he underwent an examination by the clergy in the presence of the governor of that town. He was pronounced

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

a heretic, and ordered to remain in his house until further orders. No very strict watch was, however, kept over him, and, like St. Paul before him, he was visited by and conferred with the faithful.

In the spring of 1846 he escaped to Ispahan, where he remained under the protection of the governor of that town. In the following year this governor died, and his successor in office immediately sent the Bāb in the direction of Teheran under an armed escort. The Shah's ministers, however, deeming that the Bāb's presence in the capital might prove dangerous, gave orders that he should be taken off to the distant frontier-fortress of Maku, where he composed a great number of works and was in constant correspondence with his followers. In order to put a stop to this correspondence and to set him in closer confinement, the Bāb was removed to Chihrik, whence not long after he was summoned to Tabriz, to undergo examination by some of the leading clergy in the presence of the Crown Prince (afterwards Shah Nasir-ud-Din). This examination was, of course, a pure farce and the verdict a foregone conclusion. His inquisitors hoped to catch him tripping, but their victim drove them to exasperation by the attitude of dignified silence which he adopted towards their bullying questions. Finally, they ordered him to be beaten and sent back to Chihrik, where he was now subjected to such close confinement that he was only able to communicate with his followers by means of the most peculiar devices: scraps of paper were,

for example, concealed among sweetmeats or wrapped in waterproof and sunk in milk.

While he was confined in Chihrik his teaching underwent some development, for he now declared himself to be not merely the Gate leading to the Imam Mahdi, but to be the point of revelation, the Imam himself. What he had hitherto preached in parables only he would now openly proclaim. He declared that his mission was not final, and spoke of one yet greater than himself who should come after, and should be "He whom God shall manifest." He laid great stress on this point, and expressed an urgent desire that men should receive the next manifestation better than they had received this one. He further added: "They are to remember that no revelation is final, but only represents the measure of truth which the state of human progress has rendered mankind capable of receiving."

We cannot, within the space of an article, enter into the question of the philosophic theory of numbers which played so important a part in Bābi tenets. It must, however, be mentioned that the number 19, from a variety of causes, is held in especial esteem among them. Thus, the year, in the Bāb's reformed calendar, was composed of nineteen months of nineteen days each, and so forth. And thus, too, he elected among his followers eighteen chosen disciples, whom he called the "Letters of the Living," of whom he, the nineteenth, was the "Point of Unity" which completed the sacred



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

number. There was a sort of apostolic succession among these "Letters," so that when one died some other Bābi was appointed to his place. The Bāb composed about a dozen works in all, the most important of which was the *Bayan*, a work containing a precise statement of all the doctrines taught by him during the final stage of his mission. It was, in fact, the Bābi Bible.

Leaving the Bāb for a while in the prison of Chihrik, we must turn to consider the fortunes and misfortunes of his now numerous followers. Of the eighteen chosen "Letters," three fill a most conspicuous place in the early history of the Bābi movement: namely, Mulla Husayn of Bushrawayh, who, as we have seen, was the first convert to the new faith; Mohammad Ali of Balfarush; and a woman named Kurrat ul-Ayn, or "Coolth o' the Eyn." To no one does Bābism owe more for its spread throughout Persia than to Mulla Husayn, who, during the Bāb's confinement in prison, travelled the whole country over carrying the new gospel: visiting, in turn, Ispahan, where he met with much success; Kashan, with like result; Teheran, whence he was expelled; Nishapur, where he made numberless converts, and Meshed, where he was seized by the Shah's uncle. He managed, however, to escape to Nishapur, whence he set out westward with an ever-increasing band of followers.

This was in 1848, a year as eventful almost in Persia as it was in the states of Europe. The

## BĀBISM

clergy were becoming more and more fearful of the growth of the Bābi movement, and bitterness on both sides was rapidly increasing; and it must be admitted that the Bābis, in the excess of their zeal, did not hesitate to employ the most insulting language towards the orthodox Shiites. Hostilities seemed inevitable, and the Mullas were apparently on the point of striking the first blow, when, suddenly, in September, 1848, Mohammad Shah died; and, the minds of the Mullas being filled with thoughts of succession and possible political revolts, the Bābis were for a moment forgotten. Mulla Husayn, profiting by this temporary preoccupation of the Mullas, saw fit to proceed into Mazanderan and effect a junction of his followers with those of Mulla Mohammad Ali of Balfarush, who had, in the mean time, been actively and successfully carrying on the propaganda of the new faith in that province. We must now pass to the summer of 1849, when we find Mulla Husayn and his followers shut up within the rude earthworks and palisades of a spot known as Shaykh Tabarsi, on the slopes of the Elburz Mountains, bidding defiance to the Shah's troops. For eight long months did this gallant band of Bābis, brought up for the most part, it must be remembered, to peaceful pursuits, hold the royal army at bay. At length, their brave leader, Mulla Husayn, having been killed, and their provisions exhausted, they surrendered conditionally to their besiegers, who promised them life and liberty. But the royalist officers put them

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

all to the sword. Soon after this brutal suppression of the revolt in Mazanderan, a similar scene was enacted at Zanzan, in the northwest of Persia; the same story is repeated of bravery, starvation, and death. While the siege of Zanzan was still in progress, another Bābi rising took place in the south of Persia, and the government, being thoroughly alarmed, determined to strike at the root of the matter, and to put the Bāb to death.

We left the Bāb in prison at Chihrik. He was now, once more, brought to Tabriz and tried by judges who were bent on his condemnation. The proceedings were as farcical and undignified as those to which he had been subjected on a former occasion. In spite of all their threats, he persistently maintained that he was the Imam Mahdi. His judges objected to his claims, on the ground that the Imam, whose return they awaited, would come as a mighty conqueror, to slay and subdue infidels and establish Islam throughout the world. To this the Bāb replied: "In this manner have the prophets always been doubted. The Jews were expecting the promised Messiah when Jesus appeared in their midst; and yet they rejected and slew him, because they fancied the Messiah must come as a great conqueror and king, to re-establish the faith of Moses, and give it currency throughout the world."

The Bāb and his followers, no doubt, knew as well as his judges that his sentence was predetermined; it cannot, however, be doubted that the

authorities entertained some hopes of making the Bāb recant by means of threats or promises. At length, finding these of no avail, they passed the fatal sentence, and the Bāb was led back to prison, to spend his last night in company with two faithful disciples, who were condemned to die with him.

On the morning of July 9, 1850, Mirza Ali Mohammad the Bāb, Aka Mohammad Ali, and Sayyid Husayn of Yezd were dragged through the crowded streets and bazaars of Tabriz. This pitiful procession lasted many hours, in the course of which Sayyid Husayn fell to the ground from exhaustion and pain. He was then told that, should he now recant, he might have his pardon. Thereupon—whether in a moment of weakness, or, as the Bābis declare, at the command of the Bāb himself, in order that he might convey a last message from the master to the faithful—he bought his pardon at the price of renunciation of the cause, and escaped to Teheran, where two years later he suffered martyrdom.

On the arrival of the two prisoners at the spot appointed for their execution, they were suspended, by means of ropes passed under their armpits, to staples set in a wall. As the order was given to fire the first volley, the Bāb was heard to say to his companion: "Verily, thou art with me in Paradise!" But when the smoke of the volley, which had temporarily hidden the two victims, cleared away, it was discovered that while the body of Aka Mohammad Ali hung lifeless from the staples, riddled with bullets, the Bāb had disappeared, and

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

the ends of the cords which had supported him were alone visible, the cords having been severed by bullets just above where the victim's arms had been. Here seemed to be a miracle indeed. The crowd began to murmur their expression of amazement and were prepared to believe anything. Had the Bāb managed at this moment to get away to some place of concealment, he would immediately have added to his following the whole population of Tabriz, and soon after the whole of Persia. The destinies of the house of Kajar, nay, of Islam itself, hung in the balance against the new faith. Unfortunately, however, for his cause, the Bāb had no time to realize this; he was as much surprised as the people, and, instead of attempting to hide, he ran by a first impulse to the neighboring guard-house, where he was soon discovered. Even now, for a few moments, the people were still ready to believe in a miracle; no one dared approach him, for was not his person inviolate? The situation was, however, saved, as situations so often are saved, by the action of a headstrong fool. A soldier, catching sight of the Bāb, rushed in upon him and dealt him a blow with his sword; and, so soon as the people saw blood flowing from the wound thus inflicted on the unresisting victim, their doubts and fears were at an end, and the Bāb's death was soon accomplished. Thus died the great prophet-martyr of the nineteenth century, at the age of twenty-seven, having, during a period of six brief years, of which three were spent in

## BĀBISM

confinement, attracted to his person and won for his faith thousands of devoted men and women throughout the length and breadth of Persia, and having laid the foundations of a new religion destined to become a formidable rival to Islam.

His wonderful life needs no comment. If ever a life spoke for itself, it is the Bāb's, with its simplicity, integrity, and unswerving devotion to the truth that was born in him. Though we of the West may not appreciate many details of his teaching, and though we may fail to be attracted by a faith in which the niceties of language, the mysteries of numbers, and the like play so important a part, yet none of us can help admiring the life of the founder of this religion, for in it there is neither flaw nor blemish. He felt the truth in him, and in the proclamation of that truth he moved neither hand nor foot to spare himself, but unflinchingly submitted to all manner of injustice and persecution, and, finally, to an ignominious death. That he should have attracted thousands to his cause is perhaps not a matter of such great surprise in a country like Persia, where all are naturally disposed towards religious speculation, and ever ready to examine a "new thing"; but his influence penetrated deeper than their curiosity and their minds—it reached their hearts and inspired them with a spirit of self-sacrifice, renunciation, and devotion as remarkable and as admirable as his own.

Our sketch of the Bāb's life has, of necessity,

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

been brief, but enough has, perhaps, been told of his career to suggest to all readers a comparison with the life of Christ. Those whose curiosity or sympathy may lead them to study the Bāb's life in full detail will certainly not fail to notice in many places the striking similarity which these two lives offer.

In returning to our narrative, we find the last, and by no means the least, striking of the coincidences referred to. For the Bāb, too, had his Joseph of Arimathæa. The bodies of the two victims were thrown outside the city walls, to be devoured by dogs and jackals, and a guard was set over them to insure against their being buried. But, by night, a certain wealthy Bābi, named Sulayman Khan, came with a few armed companions, and offered the guards the choice of gold or the sword. The guards accepted the gold, and allowed Sulayman Khan to carry off the body of the Bāb, which, after he had wrapped it in fine silk, he secretly conveyed to Teheran.

If the Persian government imagined that, by putting to death the Bāb, they would put a stop to the religious movement of which he was the head, they were greatly mistaken. The fortitude displayed by the Bāb at his execution served only as a stimulant to the devotion and courage of his followers; and thus the government, in ordering the death of this innocent man, defeated their own ends and gave fresh impetus to the movement they hoped to quell, and doubtless added thousands of

## BABISM

converts to the "new religion." The year 1850 witnessed the spilling of much Bābi blood. The tragic story of Shaykh Tabarsi was re-enacted in two different quarters of Persia, and in Teheran seven Bābis were "martyred" in cold blood at the instigation of the prime-minister. Persecutions went on steadily throughout the country, and the Bābis were obliged to maintain the utmost secrecy, being continually in danger of their lives.

In August, 1852, an event occurred which cannot be regarded as other than a blot in the Bābi annals. Three young and overzealous Bābis, mastered by an uncontrollable desire for vengeance on the monarch who had permitted the execution of their beloved master, made an unsuccessful attempt on the life of Shah Nāsir-ud-Din. This act not only resulted in the deaths of the would-be assassins, but led to the adoption, on the part of the government, of the most rigorous system of inquisition, persecution, and torture of their coreligionists. Vigorous search was instituted by the police in all parts of Persia to discover Bābis, and in Teheran some forty of them were surprised in the house of Sulayman Khan, of whom we have already spoken. Most of them, after bravely enduring ghastly tortures, were put to a cruel death; so appalling were the modes of torture to which these brave men and women patiently submitted that we refrain from describing them. Among the five or six who were spared was Baha Ullah, of whom we shall have occasion to speak presently. Among the



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

martyrs were Sulayman Khan, Sayyid Husayn of Yezd, who, since he had, at any rate in appearance, renounced his master two years previously, had been eager for martyrdom, and Kurrat ul-Ayn, who is one of the most remarkable figures in Bābi history. We regret that, owing to the exigencies of space, we are unable here to describe the career of this truly great woman, whose life and death would call forth our unbounded admiration, to whatever age or country she had belonged. Our wonder and our admiration must increase a hundredfold when we remember that she lived in a country where for centuries women had been kept in the background of the harem, and where they lose honor by appearing in public. She was a woman of distinguished parentage, remarkable alike for her beauty and her learning. Perhaps it was the Bāb's aim to ameliorate the position of women in Persia that first aroused her interest in his faith; however this may be, she soon became, and continued till her tragic and noble death, one of the most devoted and active of the Bāb's disciples, and was reckoned, as we have seen, among the eighteen "Letters."

Though it cannot be maintained that these would-be assassins of the Shah were the first to give a political color to the movement, it is certain that their action not merely embittered the ill-feeling of the government and the clergy towards the Bābis, but also furnished a plausible excuse for the adoption of even stronger measures than had hitherto

been employed to destroy the sect, root and branch. Thus, in spite of the utmost secrecy which the Bābis preserved among themselves, they could never feel secure from one day to another within the Shah's realms. It was on this account that their leaders now deemed it wise to fly the country, and betake themselves to a voluntary exile in Turkish territory; and Bagdad now became the heart and centre of the Bābi movement.

At this time the head of the community and chief "Letter of the Unity" was a certain Mirza Yahya, better known by the appellation of Subh-i-Ezel, or the "Dawn of Eternity."

Owing to the continued persecutions of Bābis in Persia, the little colony of exiles in Bagdad was constantly receiving additions to its numbers. In order to protect themselves effectually against the Persian government, they enrolled themselves as Turkish subjects; while their exemplary behavior was rewarded by kind treatment at the hands of the Ottoman authorities.

In 1864, at the instigation of the Persian government, which objected to their proximity to the frontier, they were removed first to Constantinople and shortly afterwards to Adrianople. It was in this town that an important schism occurred in the Bābi community, which has never since healed.

During the first fourteen years of exile—that is, from 1850 to 1864—Subh-i-Ezel was the nominal head of the Bābis and vicegerent of the Bāb. That he received this office from the Bab himself seems,

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

from documentary and other evidence, to be beyond dispute. He laid no claim to prophetic rank.

Early in 1853 an elder half-brother of his, named Beha, fled from Persia and joined the community in Bagdad, having, as we have said, come very near to martyrdom in the Teheran massacre which followed the attempt on the Shah's life. Subh-i-Ezel, while at Bagdad, led a life of comparative seclusion, and trusted to Beha the business of interviewing disciples and corresponding with the Bābis in Persia. At this time, Beha certainly admitted the supremacy of Subh-i-Ezel, and claimed no superiority over his coreligionists; but certain passages in a work called the *Ikan*, which he wrote while at Bagdad, leave room for the supposition that he already contemplated the idea of putting forward that claim which not long after forever divided the Bābis into two rival factions, the Ezelis and the Behais. What were his actual thoughts and ambitions with regard to himself it is impossible to say; we only know that, in 1866-67, while he was living with his exiled comrades in Adrianople, Beha announced that he was "He whom God shall manifest," so often alluded to by the Bāb in his writings.

Now, had Subh-i-Ezel been disposed to accept this claim of Beha, it is not improbable that his example would have been followed by the whole community. Subh-i-Ezel, however, absolutely denied Beha's claim, arguing that "He whom God shall manifest" could not be expected until the

## BĀBISM

religion founded by the Bāb, with its attendant laws and institutions, had obtained currency at least among some of the nations of the earth. It was inconceivable that one revelation should be so quickly eclipsed by another. He found many Bābis who concurred in his views, and were willing to remain faithful to him as the legitimate head of the Bābi Church. The majority of the Bābis, however, accepted the manifestation of Beha, and, in the course of time, their numbers have steadily increased, while the following of Subh-i-Ezel is constantly diminishing. In fact, to-day it is a comparatively rare occurrence to meet with an Ezeli, and one which never came within the experience of the present writer while travelling in Persia or central Asia.

The dissensions between the rival factions grew so fierce that, in 1868, the Turkish government, fearing lest this rupture might lead to public disorders, determined to separate the rival claimants to supremacy. They, therefore, sent Subh-i-Ezel to Famagusta, in Cyprus, and Beha to Acre, which two localities have ever since remained the headquarters of the Ezelis and Behais respectively.\*

It will not be necessary in this place to enter into the question of the merits of Beha's claims or Subh-i-Ezel's position. The matter has been fully set forth by Mr. E. G. Browne in his various works

\* A few Behais were sent to Cyprus and a few Ezelis to Acre. The latter were murdered soon after their arrival by some Behais, but probably without the knowledge of Beha.

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

on the Bābi movement, especially in the *New History*. Only a very small proportion of the Bābis to-day belong to the Ezeli faction; so it is Acre which now becomes and remains the chief centre of interest in the subsequent history of this religion.

It would, in reality, be more accurate to speak of the vast Bābi community which looks to Acre for guidance as Behais rather than as Bābis; for, in many respects, their beliefs bear a relation to the teaching of the Bāb very similar to that of Christianity to the Old Testament; for the revelation of Beha practically abrogated that of the Bāb. But it may be maintained that Beha's teaching was even more revolutionary than that of Christ; for, whereas Christ came to fulfil the law, and whereas the Old Testament came to be embodied in the Christian Scriptures, Beha has given his followers a new Bible which has rendered superfluous the *Bayan*.

The written works of Beha are numerous, and an authorized edition of them has been lithographed in Bombay in three volumes. Of these, the *Kitab-i-Akdas* is, in many respects, the most interesting, and it has the best claim to be regarded as the Behai Bible. Beha also wrote a very large number of smaller treatises and letters of exhortation and encouragement, which are known among the faithful as "*alwah*" (singular, "*lawh*"), or tablets. All these *alwah* emanating from Beha were and are carefully treasured up and diligently copied.

## BĀBISM

They were usually addressed to some prominent member of a local community, and, to be the recipient of one of them, however brief, was considered a very high honor.

From the date of Beha's arrival in Acre, his writings begin to assume a very different tone and character from those which pervade the *Ikan* above referred to. Seeing that the *Kitab-i-Akdas*\* is not only the most important of Beha's writings, but that it contains a résumé of all his teaching, it is fitting in this place to present the reader with a brief account of some of its contents.

The book begins with instructions as to religious observances. Prayers are to be said three times a day. The worshipper is to turn his face towards "the Most Holy Region," by which Acre is apparently intended. All congregational prayer is abolished, except in the case of the burial service. The Bābī year, which, as we have said, contains nineteen months of nineteen days each, begins on the Persian New Year's day. The year contains 366 days in all, five intercalary days being added. Fasting from sunrise to sunset is ordained during the last month of the year.

Mendicity is prohibited in the following terms: "The most hateful of mankind before God is he

\* This book was at one time difficult to obtain, as it only existed in manuscript. It has, however, been since lithographed in Bombay, and is therefore fairly accessible. It is composed in Arabic. For the following summary of contents I am indebted to an article by Mr. E. G. Browne, without whose admirable writings we should know very little of Bābism in its late developments.

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

who sits and begs; take hold of the robe of means, relying on God, the Cause of causes." The use of knives and forks in eating, instead of the hands, is enjoined. Cleanliness is insisted on.

Marriage is enjoined on all. Wives who for a period of nine months have had no news of their husbands are permitted to marry again, but if they are patient it is better, "since God loves those who are patient." If quarrels arise between a man and his wife, he is not to divorce her at once, but must wait for a whole year, so that, perhaps, he may become reconciled to her. The kings of the earth are exhorted to adopt and spread the new faith. Wine and opium are forbidden. The sacred books are to be read regularly, but never so long as to cause weariness. Enemies are to be forgiven, nor must evil be met with evil.

In conclusion, we must quote a very remarkable passage\* with regard to future manifestations, which is noteworthy in regard to the position assumed by his son, Abbas Efendi, to-day: "*Who-soever lays claim to a matter (i. e., a mission), ere one thousand full years have passed, verily he is a lying impostor.*"

Beha died in 1892, at the age of seventy-seven, in Acre, which town he had never been permitted to leave. He was here visited by the faithful, who regarded Acre as an object of pilgrimage, and also by inquirers. He was regarded by the faithful as God Almighty himself, and the respect and rev-

\* To be found on pp. 13 and 14 of the lithographed edition.

## BĀBISM

erence they paid him were unbounded. He had four sons, of whom the two eldest were Abbas Efendi and Aga Mohammad Ali.

On the death of Beha, Abbas Efendi, as the eldest son, became the spiritual head of the Behais; though it appears that his claims to this position were not admitted by all, for he found, at the first, a rival in the person of a certain Aga Mirza Jān, of Kashan, who had been the amanuensis of Beha. This rivalry did not, however, have any appreciable effect on the position of Abbas Efendi, who receives, at any rate from the vast majority of the Behais of to-day, a veneration equal to that accorded to his father.

Aga Mohammad Ali, since his father's death, has lived a life of retirement and seclusion. It is known that he was unable to approve the course adopted by his brother, Abbas Efendi; but he has always strenuously avoided an open quarrel with him, and has refused to give written answers to the large number of Bābis who were anxious to know his views. His main object has been to avoid any further division in the Bābi Church.

In conclusion, a few words must be said in regard to the whereabouts and condition of the Bābis at the present day. It is impossible to obtain reliable statistics as to their actual numbers, but one million is probably near the mark. The majority inhabit the large towns of Persia, such as Teheran, Ispahan, Yezd, and Kerman. Persecutions are nowadays of rare occurrence, though the Bābis



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

can never feel really secure within Persian territory, partly on account of the political stigma which attaches to their name, and partly on account of the suspicion with which they are regarded by the Mullas. Three years ago, Teheran alone was said to contain upward of ten thousand Bābis, and no doubt their numbers have greatly increased in the interval. It is hard to say precisely what degree of caution they consider requisite, or to what extent they are known as Bābis to the authorities and the populace in general. Certain it is that many distinguished persons are known by all to belong to this sect, and that they are on this account put to no apparent inconvenience. The Bābis are law-abiding citizens, and ply their business on an equal footing with Mussulmans. No Bābi, however, who is known to be such, is allowed to enter a mosque. They have no places of worship of their own, but hold their meetings, generally after sundown, in the houses of various members of the community. The present writer has attended many of these gatherings, and has always come away deeply impressed by the simplicity, earnestness, and courtesy of the Bābis. At these meetings, a practical example of the Bābi principle of equality is to be seen. Here we find, side by side, a learned doctor, an officer, a merchant, and a servant, sitting, as the Persians say, "on four knees," intent on discussing the latest news of the Bābis in other parts of the world; listening to the recitation of a poem by some Bābi poet, or hearing

## BĀBISM

the contents of the latest *lawh* from Acre. During the reading of these letters the strictest silence prevails, and pipes and cigarettes are for the time discarded. In Turkish and Russian territory the position of the Bābis is one of comparative immunity. Askabad, in Transcaspia, is a very important centre, and it is there, perhaps, that the followers of Beha enjoy the greatest freedom.

Finally, we must mention the recent spread of this religious movement in non-Mohammedan countries, which is practically confined to the United States of America. From the latest information, it would appear that no less than three thousand Americans now subscribe to the new faith. The propaganda first began in 1893, at the World's Congress of Religions in Chicago, when a certain Bābi, named Ibrahim Kheirallah, who had come to the United States on business, gave a course of fifteen lectures on Mohammedanism and the various movements which had grown out of it. In the course of these "lessons," he continually referred to the teachings of the Bāb, and in a short time he is said to have secured over one hundred "believers." He next proceeded to New York City, where he published his lectures. Such were the beginnings of Bābism in the United States.

Of the subsequent history of the movement in America it is at present hard to speak. At all events, it seems that here, too, the division between Abbas Efendi and Aga Mohammad Ali has been at work, and that the first Bābi missionary, Kheiral-

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

lah, belongs to the party of the latter. The followers of Abbas Efendi, who believe him in all sincerity and devotedness of faith to be the incarnation of God, are known as the *Sabit*is, or the "Firm," while those who deny his claims have received from their opponents the name of *Nakiz*is, or "Adversaries." The principal Bābi centres in the United States are as follows: Chicago, about one thousand; Kenosha, Wis., from four hundred to five hundred; New York City, about four hundred; Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia; Wilmington and Bellevue, Del.; Newark, Fanwood, and Hoboken, N. J.; Brooklyn and Ithaca, N. Y.; Detroit, Mich.; Boston, Cincinnati, San Francisco, and Denver.

Bābism, though still, as it were, in its infancy, is said to count to-day over one million adherents, and the possibilities of its future success are infinite, for, in spite of internal schisms and external disabilities, there is no falling off either in the number of fresh converts or in the religious fervor of believers.

E. DENISON ROSS.

JEWES AND JUDAISM IN THE  
NINETEENTH CENTURY



## JEWES AND JUDAISM IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

THE light of the nineteenth century, passing through the Jewish prism, throws a peculiar spectrum upon the screen of modern history. The colors are not exactly those of the rainbow, nor is the prism akin to the solid, polished, and transparent glass through which the light is beautifully separated; it is the troubled Jewish mind through which it passes, and the image seen on the screen is accordingly different. It begins with the roseate hues of hope, to which succeed the deeper red tints of enthusiasm, and it closes with the yellow of despair. To drop the metaphor, a survey of the sequence of vicissitudes through which the Jews have passed during the last hundred years is like writing the history of the most noteworthy changes in the history of modern civilization, and of the different moods and ways in which they have affected one peculiarly receptive portion of human society.

The Jews do not merely live in the midst of other nations, but they also live with those nations and

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

share with them in all the emotions of the spirit and in all the trials of the body. It is a fallacy to assume, as is often done, that the Jews live a secluded life, and that the Jews of one country are identical in every respect with those of other countries, whose civilization and the conditions of whose life are dissimilar. The differences between the German and the French Christian will be found to exist also between the German and the French Jew, though not manifested in the same manner. Assimilation has constantly been going on, and participation in the same national characteristics, between Jew and Christian, though not on identical, but at least upon parallel lines. The study of the Jew in various countries brings this fact out forcibly. We are sure to find in each a more or less faithful reflex of the national peculiarities characteristic of each of those countries; a *reflex*, but not an exact copy; a translation, but not a facsimile. In this process of adaptation from the neighbor the original pattern had passed through the mould of the Jewish mind, it had been seen from a specific visual angle, and it had been reproduced slightly differing from its prototype; it bears now the stamp of Jewish individualism. But a close scrutiny will reveal the identity in every essential feature with that primitive original.

If I should attempt to sum up in a short sentence the whole history of Jewish life in this century, I would say that it has been the awakening and strengthening of self-consciousness and the desire

## J E W S   A N D   J U D A I S M

of securing absolute equality with non-Jews. This tendency has asserted itself in all the walks of life, in politics as well as in science and religion. In their eagerness the Jews may have sometimes overshot the mark and produced the semblance of aggressiveness. The Jews have practically rediscovered themselves, their past, and their position among the nations of the earth. They have come out of the artificial seclusion in which they had been kept for the last three or four centuries, and they at once acted upon the motto "*Nihil humanum a me alienum puto.*" This participation in the general movement was only gradual, and did not occur in all the countries where the Jews lived at the same time and to the same extent. It followed in the wake of the political emancipation of the nations themselves, and of the new tendencies that each nation evolved.

Movement, agitation, must not be taken, however, as indicating always a development making only for progress: it is as often retrograde as progressive; it sometimes leads from one extreme to another. Like the waters of the sea, the waves mount until they reach the highest crest, only to flow downward, and the movement is, after all, stationary, depression following upheaval. Thus it happens with the development of Judaism in this century. In order to delineate the general drift of this movement I will treat it from the point of view of political disabilities, scientific revival, religious changes, and, lastly, national tendencies. These



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

are neither all synchronous nor simultaneous. The progress in one direction often means retrogression in the other; without being mutually exclusive, they are not all on the same plane, but relieve one another in turns.

Paradoxical as it may sound, it is none the less true that, at the end of the last century, the Jews enjoyed the full protection of the law only in France and in Turkey. In fact, they have never suffered any persecution in the latter country, and the record of the Turks has never been stained by any such acts of persecution as all the nations of Europe have gloried in in the past. In France, the change in the political position of the Jews was a corollary to the principles of equality and fraternity proclaimed by the great Revolution. It was not an act of cool calculation and firm determination to wipe out the injustice committed against the Jews for so long a period; but the rush of enthusiasm evoked by the grand oratory of Mirabeau, and seconded by the Abbé Grégoire, carried the assembly by storm, and the French nation then granted the Jews the first gift of freedom. It was the dawn of the new light that was to shine upon the whole of Europe, the first blast of that spirit that threw down the walls of feudalism, and opened the gates to the new life which henceforth was to rule. This emancipation has thus the character of a gift, made in consequence of abstract theories. It is not a concession wrung from a reluctant foe by the superior force of conviction,

## JEWS AND JUDAISM

not the result of a long struggle between darkness and light, not the outcome of a long process of maturing in the mind and heart of men, but came only and solely as a gift, irrespective of the merits of the recipients, heedless, and dependent upon the transitory mood of the giver. But, whatever its origin may have been, the Jews were no less grateful for the first definite break with a terrible past. The number of French Jews at the time of the Revolution was not very great. Most of them lived in Alsace, and in only a few of the larger towns of France were they at all numerous. The fickle character of this new abolition of disabilities, too long endured, was shown by the vicissitudes it had to go through, the animosities which it raised when the republic became a monarchy under Napoleon, and the attempts which were made to wreck the whole work of liberation, or at least to jeopardize its fair working. Thereupon, Napoleon called together the first public Jewish assembly, known as the Sanhedrim, to which some of the objections and accusations which had been raised were submitted for examination and reply. I mention only one of these objections, as it reappears in our days, viz. : the question as to how the Jews could reconcile their patriotism with the desire of returning to Palestine. The answers these notables were able to give satisfied Napoleon, though none of their direct recommendations was carried out.

The importance of this new departure lay in the fact that it threw open to the Jews, for the first time,

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

the gates which had been closed to them all over Europe. They were introduced to the new parliamentary forms of modern life, to the open discussion and ventilation of grievances and of vital questions concerning them. In these deliberations of political assemblies they had a voice, and had no longer to wait and hear the result of the deliberations of others upon their affairs, deciding upon their hopes and fears, upon the measure of protection that was to be granted to or withheld from them. For at the beginning of the century the position of the Jews in all the other countries of Europe, always excepting Turkey, was full of degrading anomalies. The Ghetto, originally an Italian invention, had been naturalized in the German-speaking countries. The German nation itself was cooped up in airtight and, if I may coin the word, light-tight compartments. Split up into thirty or forty small governments, with laws and regulations differing one from the other, these German "states" devoted their pettifogging and pedantic ingenuity to inventing new regulations and prohibitions against the Jews, who were living in still smaller Ghettos than the rest of the inhabitants of these principalities. It would be absurd to attempt the enumeration of these regulations. Suffice it to say that even marriage was not allowed; only a certain number were permitted to live in each small community. There was no question of freedom of movement, none of the

## JEW S AND JUDAISM

civil rights which every stranger now enjoys in foreign countries. They had mostly to live in a circumscribed area, to earn their livelihood by certain fixed means, to follow a certain limited number of trades and vocations. There was no freedom to travel from one place to another or to reside outside the radius, the "Pale," prescribed by the authorities. Fines and taxes were imposed with a lavish hand. The censor kept watch over all literary attempts. Every feeling of common interest with the Gentile world outside was crushed out, and it would have been a wild dream indeed for some of the dwellers in those German Ghettos to believe in a change so sudden and so radical as was about to happen.

The triumphal march of Napoleon's victorious armies swept away all these artificial barriers, and let fresh air and light in where up to then only the ghosts of mediæval times used to stalk about freely. The dawn of a new era broke upon the Jews as well as upon all other nations. The call to arms for freedom from oppression, for liberation from feudal and secular thralldom, was heard by all the nations of Europe, and most of them responded to that call. New ideas were propagated, such as the fraternization of mankind, equality before the law, liberty of thought and action, words and ideas up to then living in the domain of philosophic dreamers. Unhampered by any traditional prejudices or vested interests, realizing to the full the significance of these doctrines, the Jews at once rallied to them.

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

It was the first step towards complete emancipation, to obtaining an equal footing with the rest of the inhabitants and to the realization of their hopes and aspirations. It is no wonder that the Jews eagerly seized this opportunity and would no longer allow the awakened self-consciousness to go to sleep again. The rest of the time was devoted mostly to strengthen this feeling. A continual war had been waged against it from the moment that Napoleon was defeated. The crudest reaction set in. All the old boundaries were re-erected, the old disabilities reimposed upon the Jews. They saw the walls of the Ghetto being rebuilt, after having tasted the sweets of free life and intercourse with their fellow-citizens of another faith. The nations were also again split up into small states, and all the privileges granted under stress of war were being revoked. Neither did the new democracy tamely submit, nor did the Jews view with equanimity the loss of their recently acquired freedom. This explains the part they thenceforth took in the struggle of the democracy and their adherence to liberalism, from which alone they could expect the redress of the grievances which they now felt more keenly than at any previous time. It also explains the sympathy felt by prominent thinkers among the Jews with the claims of labor, and their intuitive foresight in the treatment of the economical questions which are now dominating the civilized world. I shall have to revert to this part of the modern

## JEW S AND JUDAISM

fabric of society, as we are standing undoubtedly under the sign of coming contests between capital and labor, new problems are arising, and economic wars are threatening between nation and nation, between state and state.

The horizon had been greatly enlarged during the first years of the last century, and, with that mental agility which is the outcome of the intellectual training pursued by the Jews for centuries, they at once applied themselves to master the new fields of science opened to them. Questions which had previously not crossed the threshold of the Ghetto were now brought home to the Jews. An agitation was kept up to strengthen the position once won. Need there was for such an agitation, for at a given time there were in Germany alone no less than thirty-six separate legislations dealing with the position of the Jews. Bit by bit they had to be demolished again, and only as late as 1870 the last trace of the legal disabilities of the Jews disappeared in Prussia, also to be repealed soon afterwards, at least officially, in the other smaller German states. In France alone, though at times limited and threatened, the liberties once acquired were retained by the Jews. There also reaction tried to raise its head with the restoration of the monarchy; but the traditions of the Revolution were too strong, and the Jews had already occupied so strong a position that it was no easy matter to oust them from it. France has remained, up to a very short time ago, the ideal country of

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

freedom and liberty for the Jews all over the Continent. There the Jews also first identified themselves entirely with the highest aspirations of the French nation; and were rewarded by an unstinted recognition of civil and political equality. All posts were open to them, all careers were now the legitimate aim of the younger generation, and they availed themselves fully of these rights, which they did not consider as privileges granted to them or some exceptional treatment vouchsafed in the form of a gift of toleration.

A word now as to the Jews in England. In England all those hopes and aspirations of European democracy, freedom from mediæval trammels, equality before the law, and, above all, the sense of true justice which pervaded all classes of society, had been for centuries, I might say, the common property of the nation. An ingrained feeling of justice, and a respect and veneration for the Sacred Scriptures unequalled in another country of the world, contributed to win in time for the Jews the full protection of these admirable laws. Incidentally, I may remark that England, knowing then as little as it does now the true state of the nations on the Continent, true to her principles, fought, as she imagined, the battle of liberty, and lent her hand to crush Napoleon under the impression that she was crushing tyranny. In fact, she assisted in rehabilitating the worst form of political reaction. Instead of one, she helped to set up numberless petty and worse tyrannies.

## JEW S AND JUDAISM

I am not referring here to those wars against Napoleon waged in self-defence, and proclaimed as such. I am rather alluding to the general opinion, to the repetition of the assurance, that in fighting Napoleon tyranny was crushed. The Jews knew better, and the subsequent upheavals in every part of Europe showed that the masses of the down-trodden people knew better. The disabilities of the Jews in England disappeared also after a long struggle. Success was achieved by enlightening public opinion and by getting the sympathies of the masses, which have never since been estranged.

While this evolution was taking place at the centres of civilization, the position of the Jews in less-favored countries was on the whole better, in so far as they were deluded by no mirage. The nations in whose midst they lived neither knew nor as yet appreciated the sweets of freedom. In Russia, especially, serfdom had not yet disappeared, and in comparison to the "Souls" of Gogol's powerful novel, the bodies of the Jews were in a better position. Nicholas II. attempted some reforms, but he carried them out in a drastic manner; he forced the Jews into the ranks of the army, and at a given moment, finding them reluctant to become life-long soldiers, ordered a number of young children to be forcibly taken from their parents and to be brought up with peasants in distant parts of the country, to be drafted afterwards into the army. It is the very counter-



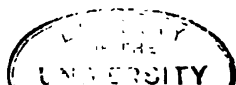
## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

part to the old practice of the Turks to take young Christian boys and bring them up as Mohammedans, to form the body of janizaries. I mention this fact, not merely to show that the Jews in Russia were then, as now, at the absolute mercy of the autocratic government, in some respects very little better treated than the serfs, but also to point to the first cause of the modern Jewish emigration from the east of Europe to the west and to America. The "*Drang nach dem Westen*" so conspicuous at the end of ancient history, preceding the mediæval period, was repeated now on a smaller scale by the migration which set in, which has been going on uninterruptedly and is assuming immense proportions.

The Jewries of the West became thus enlarged by the new-comers, and also modified to a certain extent by this element. The number and importance of Jewish communities increased everywhere through this influx of new blood. There is no greater mistake than to imagine that this new element was merely the receiving one; that it obtained in the West more personal protection, greater liberties, and greater facilities for intellectual and social development; they were to a great extent also givers. The share which they have taken in the spiritual development of the Jews in the nineteenth century is by no means inconsiderable, as will become evident later on when I deal with this aspect of our problem. Characteristic for this first period is the enormous spreading out of the Jews all over Europe,

## JEW S AND JUDAISM

by far greater than has happened during the last four preceding centuries, and on a much larger scale than even at the time of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain. Then, and at the time of the Cossack persecutions in the seventeenth century, the Jews were fleeing for their lives. The alternative was either death or conversion to Christianity. In the last century, it was voluntary immigration; for if they remained in their old homes, the alternative was persecution and the life of a helot, or spiritual destitution and the death of the soul, though not immediately that of the body. They chose the life of freedom, of hard work and brighter prospects. An alluring picture drew them by thousands from the Ghettos of the East to the free countries of the West. The air was filled with poetry: one heard of the teaching of "human brotherhood," of "equality between man and man," of cosmopolitan tendencies. The glamour of poetical romanticism was shed round the past. The principles of altruism, Comte's Positivism, the streams of new life, were all so different from the dirges and wails of tortured souls, from the echoes that resounded in other parts of the world. Equality, liberty, cosmopolitan levelings, were so much unlike the "divine rights" claimed by a few chosen individuals, the aristocratic and feudal privileges from which the rest of the people was rigidly excluded, which, for instance, ruined Poland, and divided central Europe into numberless petty states. All those grand ideas,



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

nurtured in the hearts of the Jews under the designation of "Messianic hopes," were now apparently realized. No wonder, therefore, that the Jews should feel attracted, and should change their wretched birthplaces for better countries. Out of the political gloom and the night of persecution into the light of freedom and hope!

The improvement in the situation of the Jews in the west of Europe went on up to about 1875. The German Empire had scarcely been established when the old war between kaiser and pope broke out anew. Under the name of "*Kulturkampf*," Bismarck and his Minister Falke inaugurated an era of persecution of the German Catholics. I cannot enter here upon the merits of that struggle. But the fight against one religious denomination, though carried on for political purposes, was dexterously shifted from the Catholics and by the Catholics on to the German Jews. Some of the latter, such as Lasker, in their quality as deputies, supported Bismarck in the Reichsrath; hence the hatred against them. Much love had never been lost on the Jews in Germany. It required very little skill to revive the old feud, which had never been entirely obliterated. The old spirit was still powerful; more than a solitary spark of prejudice had remained alive, and it was soon blown into a mighty flame. The principles enunciated for the first time, and formulated by men who pretend to stand on the summit of "Culture," have spread far beyond the borders of the

## JEWS AND JUDAISM

"Fatherland," and have become now the catch-words of thoughtless demagogues and of irresponsible leaders of the new crusade against the Jews. Germany plays so important a rôle in the modern history of mankind, and has so deeply influenced the current of modern thought and habits, that I must devote more space to the consideration of the changes wrought there than to those in any other country. It forms, as it were, the centre whence all the effects found elsewhere can be shown to have radiated. As the treatment to which the Jews are exposed is a sort of psychological barometer for the ethical position which a nation can claim in the world of morals and of truth, an examination of the principles which have ruled, and now rule again, might also be of some interest to the student of modern ethics.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, Germany, split up into numberless small states, with a narrow political horizon, and yet not having a literature of its own, was deeply influenced by French and English literature. Romanticism, the poetical glorification of the Middle Ages, due to a great extent to absolute ignorance of the true aspects of things during that period, also began to be popular in Germany. But while, in England, Bishop Percy's *Collection* produced, in the long run, Scott's *Ivanhoe*, in Germany Herder's *Stimmen der Völker* did not produce Lessing's *Nathan der Weise*, which preceded it, but stimulated the glorification of the Teutonic Middle Ages, the

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

romanticism of Schlegel and Brentano, and ultimately a heathen Teutomania, which excluded everything from its Walhalla that could not prove Germanic ethnic descent. The first logical consequence was the appearance of pamphlets from men like Rühss and Riel, in which they declared the Jews to be incapable of joining in the Teutonic nation as equal units, and proposed to grant them mere toleration as a people of another race and of another religious mould. In order, as it were, to atone for this new heathendom, which pervaded the universities, there set in a peculiar religious coloring of Christianity—a sentimental, vague Christianity—not free from mediæval mysticism and licentiousness. The spokesman of this species was Schleiermacher, whose teaching, improved upon by his followers, ended in the declaration of a belief in a special Teutonic Christianity, with a God of its own. It was anything but true Christianity. Furthermore, natural science, which reached its highest development in the last century, on the one hand sapped the foundation of religion just as much as the rationalistic school of Tübingen, with the new Higher Criticism of the Bible, did so on the other. All these causes contributed to a lowering of the standard of equality granted to the Jews, and robbed them of the fruits of the sacrifices which they had willingly—nay, cheerfully—brought to the altar of their German “Fatherland” when they fought in the ranks of the German armies against their own liberator, Napoleon.

## JEWS AND JUDAISM

Nor was this the only sacrifice which they brought. In their endeavor to show in a practical manner the hollowness of those pedants and dreaming reactionaries who would fain revive the glorious times of the Middle Ages, they almost outdid the Germans in their patriotism, and, carried too far in their zeal, overstepped the boundaries which kept them in safety. It was all in vain. The principles of the Teutomans have survived to a surprising degree. Hatred of the foreigner in blood, glorification and exaltation of whatever appeared to be German, or rather Teutonic, especially as it led indirectly to the establishment of the German Empire, is growing steadily alongside of a growing unrest and disintegration. Mystical, specific Christianity, rank apostasy, and crude materialism act as such disintegrating forces, with socialistic tendencies opposed to feudal pretensions; all these and the lust of persecution, shown also by the conflict with Rome, contribute in their way to this process of disintegration, and have made it very easy for the skilful manipulator to turn popular prejudices against the Jews, pointing to them as the primary cause of the social and religious discontent permeating various classes of society. They were charged with the responsibility for all the skepticism that turned people away from the Church, and for the political radicalism which threatened the prerogatives of privileged persons and classes.

All this, however, would not have sufficed to drive the Jews from their legally safeguarded

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

position, and would not have found favor with the masses, had the masses not been weaned, effectively and energetically, from those lofty sentiments of cosmopolitanism, altruism, equality, the brotherhood of man, and all the glorious principles for which they died on the barricades during the first half of the last century. Local patriotism had been fostered, and, above all, the nation had been put into the strait-jacket of militarism, where it was taught to obey and not to reason, and where it was to find political salvation. The era of blood and iron set in, and the higher principles of humanity, of justice, of equality to all the members of the state, had been drowned in the blood of many battle-fields. Nationalism—i. e., egotism in its most brutal form—took the place of humanitarianism; seclusion, that of expansion; personal interests, that of general welfare; and all together have produced and still produce a spirit of bitter jealousy and envy, of hatred and persecution against anything and everything that runs counter to the new racial and national prejudices, which are set up as the only standard of true patriotism. Hence the universal moral decay, the ethical disintegration which slowly darkened the horizon of the civilized world in the last twenty-five years of the past century. This is the psychological origin of the new moral disease known under the name of Anti-Semitism. Born and bred in Germany, it was nurtured there and has spread like a plague

## JEWS AND JUDAISM

from country to country, following in the wake of militarism, despotism, the brutalization of the masses, false patriotism, greed, and jealousy.

It is not to be supposed that the Jews, whose life is being made more miserable from day to day, had no share in this change of sentiment and treatment. The fault which can be laid at their doors is that they had neglected to study the lessons of the past. They were too eager to cast off that past, to obliterate every trace of it, and to show by sacrifices not asked for, nor even expected from them, how much they wished to identify themselves with the country in which they happened to live, from the moment they were given a status of equality. To them the dawn of liberty was sure to be followed by the full light of the day, a day that would never end, a sun that would never set! And so they threw their whole heart and soul into the melting-pot of Germanization, Anglicization, Gallicization, etc., expecting to come out of it without any dross of the past clinging to them, shining in the new light of patriotism as bright as the other inhabitants of those countries. They believed strongly in the sincerity of the generous sentiments expressed by others, and thought that such generosity claimed like generosity or renunciation on their part. Herein lies the fundamental error of the Jews, which exacted from them so bitter a penalty at the close of the last century. Starting from false premises, they were led to false conclusions. There



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

was no generosity on the part of those who granted the Jews equality and liberty. It was merely an act of justice; it was the homage rendered to the awakened spirit of truth and right, and claimed, as such, no more recognition or thanks than any act of justice performed in the courts of any country. The Jew bears the burdens of the state in the same manner as the other inhabitants, and has therefore just as much claim to participate in all rights and liberties as the rest of his fellow-citizens.

To go out of the way in order to demonstrate the fulfilment of one's duty as a citizen is a sign that we believe a doubt to be lingering in the mind of the other which we feel bound to destroy.

To imagine again that any sacrifice that a nation with such a past as the Jews could make would at once alter their innate characteristics, or would in any way promote an intimate fusion of two races, was the greatest mistake possible. Short of apostasy, the Jews did not shrink from any sacrifice. In consequence of the awakened consciousness, their desire was to obliterate every vestige of that past, and to be merged completely into the nation with which they aspired to live on a footing of absolute equality. It was an impossible and unnatural attempt. Instead of being satisfied with marching on parallel lines, they wished to walk in converging lines, hoping that, at some time whose advent they wished to hasten as much as possible, the point of contact would be reached. We witness, therefore, throughout the

## JEWS AND JUDAISM

greater part of the last century a craving for blind imitation, in the vain hope of obtaining absolute identification and assimilation.

I am not inveighing against the legitimate desire of full participation in the conquests over the forces of nature, or against their eager wish to take, if possible, a large share in the intellectual victories which science in the widest sense has gained. True science is not limited to one nation or to one hemisphere. It stands far above the petty divisions invented by clannishness and kept up by sordid motives. Endowed with that keenness of intellect which was the heirloom of so many centuries of mental training, the Jews soon identified themselves with all the progress which has marked the intellectual life of the world during the last hundred years. There is no branch of knowledge in which the Jews are not fully represented: in medicine as well as in the natural sciences; in diplomacy as well as in law; in music and painting, the drama and fiction. In every country and in every land where facilities were given to them to acquire the requisite knowledge the Jews were not behind in utilizing them to the fullest extent. To give here a list of such men as have contributed to the general advancement of civilization would be too tedious a task. Every science knows them, every branch of learning counts scores among them, and especially among the followers of exact sciences are they well known. This, however, is of little consequence for the inner

history of Israel during the nineteenth century. It was more the outcome of the endeavor to continue on new lines the same activity that had been displayed by them throughout the centuries.

Of far greater moment, however, is the inner religious change which has taken place in consequence of this craving for assimilation. It played them false, inasmuch as it made the Jews believe that their identification with the higher intellectual pursuits, and the equality they had gained therein, would also bring with it the social equality of which they had dreamed. They fashioned their lives according to non-Jewish models. Easily influenced as they have shown themselves in all times, they played at being Teutons of a new complexion. The barriers of the Ghetto once broken, all that which seemed to remind them of it was henceforth to be forgotten, obliterated from the mind and heart of the new generation. We see, therefore, a profound change in the religious life of the Jews. Mendelssohn's activity, the introduction of the pure German instead of the corrupt German which the Jews spoke, the acquaintance with German literature and the philosophical tendencies of the time, caused the Jews to attempt the recasting of the old faith and ceremonial on what they believed to be a rational basis. To curtail the service, to introduce German sermons, to ape the outward form of Christian worship, to eliminate Hebrew from the synagogue and from the house, were the first and principal aims of the new school

## JEWS AND JUDAISM

headed by Jacobsohn and followed by many. The ultimate ambition of these reformers was to bring about at least outward identity in worship between Jews and non-Jews, and to sweep away the last remnant of the specifically Jewish life in the Ghetto.

Growing skepticism, the heathen tendencies and the romantic *Schwärmerei* of their Teutonic models, were not without effect upon their blind followers. And when the "Teutonic-Christian" state held out the bribery of appointments and honor for apostasy, it became rampant. A blow had been struck at the old faith by the example set in the famous "Salons" of Berlin, by the apostasy of the daughters of Mendelssohn, of Rachel Levine, and others. No wonder if men like Heine and Boerne were driven to similar expedients. Nearly every man who aspired, and I may say aspires now, to the chair of a professor at a German university had first to sacrifice his convictions. The want of religious fervor and the lack of adhesion to the old teaching spread very much among the Jews and was one of the principal characteristics of the nineteenth century. More even than the Christians did the Jews of the west of Europe, and, for that matter, those of America, reject the old teaching, consciously or unconsciously animated by the same sentiment of placing themselves on an equal footing with their neighbors. In order to share in an imaginary social equality, they gave up every distinctive mark and appeared

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

to the non-Jews as stripped of every Jewish ideal, given up entirely to the mimicking of others, without losing, however, in spite of what they had so fondly imagined, those traits which had been impressed on their minds and habits by the seclusion of the Ghetto. We thus find Judaism undergoing a radical process of transformation among the Western Jews, which has to a certain extent estranged them from their Eastern brothers, without bringing them perceptibly nearer the goal at which they aimed.

This movement did not pass unchallenged. These changes, not being born of profound scholarship, but attempting merely to replace the things that appeared antiquated and irksome by others borrowed from foreign sources that appeared new and attractive, not resting on a sympathetic or romantic appreciation of the past, were challenged by men of a totally different stamp, who have successfully driven this current back.

The example set by German romanticism, turning back with admiration to the twilight of the Middle Ages, was not lost upon the Jews. Those who had immigrated from eastern Europe or come from the then half-civilized communities of Austria and Galicia, learned soon to imitate and to search for similar examples in the old, now almost forgotten, literature of ancient times. For the Jews had no period of obscurantism, no real Middle Ages; they had a long record of mental activity, which, however, lay buried under the ruins of the

## J E W S   A N D   J U D A I S M

old world. To this the new generation turned with love, in the hope of showing to their people that the Jewish past was no whit behind other nations in pathos and romanticism, in learning and intellectual achievements. Thus arose the school of the History of Judaism, whose foremost representatives were Zunz, Frankel, and notably Graetz, the famous historian.

Other branches of purely Hebrew learning began to be cultivated, and the scientific methods of the Christian schools slowly found their way into the midst of the Jews. The beginning of the nineteenth century saw the first *Jewish Review*, in which Heine's friends and contemporaries collaborated, in which Zunz published his first essay on Rabbinic literature, and the close of it saw the gigantic undertaking of Funk & Wagnall—an *Encyclopaedia of the Jews*, in ten huge volumes. It is to be the embodiment of the scientific results obtained solely in the course of that century.

The larger mass of the Jews, those who remained behind in the east of Europe, have participated only to a lesser degree in the modifications which have shaped the life of their better-situated brethren in the West. In political liberties, in aspirations, in the new feeling of consciousness, in social equality, and in work in the field of science, they have kept pace with their immediate neighbors, always trying for the best and often succeeding. The *religious conflicts also found an echo in those lands*, but it took some time before they penetrated behind

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

the Chinese wall which resists the entrance of Western ideas into the mighty Empire of the East. But there are no permanent barriers against the spirit. It scaled these walls also, though a considerable interval elapsed ere it reached the masses living beyond. The conflict is still going on, but a movement since begun is driving the Jewish life into new channels.

On the other hand, the receding wave of a once mighty Messianic enthusiasm left on the strand the germs of a new mystical teaching, which resembles in one way the vagaries and miracles told by the monks of the Nitrian Desert, and the tales of Avva Pahomius and St. Anthony, in the third and fourth centuries in Egypt, and in another the principles that underlie the conception of the Dalai-Lama of Tibet, the ever-recurring incarnation of Buddha as the visible intermediary between God and man. The Hassidim, with their wonder-working "Rebbe," the living incarnation of a superhuman intermediary between them and God, the substitution of a Quaker-like, enthusiastic form of worship at times when the spirit moves them, and freedom from other ceremonial injunctions connected with worship and prayer, is to a certain extent the form which reform has taken in the East. Unconsciously rebelling against some rabbinical tenets, it has contributed in its way to undermine the older form and to disintegrate Judaism in a peculiar manner.

To the impartial observer of these internal

## JEW S AND JUDAISM

changes within the spiritual life of Jewry, they appear like the dead leaves which are scattered by the first shaking of the old tree by the storm of persecution that rages; they fall from the stem of Judaism, and are the humus out of which a new life will grow. And a new life is growing. The manifold causes which have contributed to the awakening of Jewish self-consciousness and to strengthen it for at least half a century have not disappeared without leaving great results. If nothing is lost in nature, dumb and speechless as it is, still less is anything lost that has been stirred in the human soul once awakened. It may change, it may pass through a metamorphosis, but it will be like the caterpillar which becomes a butterfly. Just as little as the Middle Ages could be restored or the Ghetto revived upon the old lines, so little could one expect to find the Jews any longer with that broken spirit that submitted to ignominies. Self-consciousness, once awakened, will not allow itself to be lulled again into a lethargic sleep. The unity of Israel has also been practically demonstrated by the Jews during the past century. They have contributed to the emancipation of the body, as well as of the spirit, of their less fortunate brethren. The cause of the Jews in one country has been felt as that of the Jews in all other countries. This feeling was more pronounced in those countries where the Jews believed themselves to have obtained absolute equality in every respect with the other inhabitants. Such was the case in France, England, and, re-



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

cently, in America. The principles advocated are those of human liberty, of equal duties and equal rights. In the name of these great principles, men like Sir Moses Montefiore and Isaac Adolphe Crémieux could not allow the horrible blood-accusation against the Jews, formulated for the first time again in 1840 in Damascus, to pass unchallenged. They stood up for their falsely accused brethren and defended their cause, not merely in England and France, but personally in Constantinople and Alexandria, and there refuted these baseless calumnies. It was reserved to the closing years of the nineteenth century to revive those horrible accusations, as if to give the lie to the intervening fifty years of comparative progress and civilization.

The result of that mission to the East has been much more far-reaching, for it led to the establishment of an association whose principal object is to protect the Jews in those countries where they are still kept in a kind of social bondage, and to promote their emancipation by legal means. Thus was the *Alliance Israélite* founded in Paris. In 1870, during the Franco-German war, when the Alliance in Paris was crippled, a branch was established in England, identical with the French in all its aims. Spiritual emancipation was part of the programme, hence the foundation of schools in the East.

With the modification of the status of the Jews in Europe, and with the changed conditions under which the people grew up, the former part of the

## JEW S AND JUDAISM

Alliance's activity may be said to have come to an end with the Russo-Turkish War. The spirit of chivalry and of generous impulses has from that time forward been completely driven out of Europe. Each country, every government, inaugurated for itself an era of self-interest of the basest commercial type. With a few noteworthy exceptions made by the English government, the nations turned a polite but none the less deaf ear to the complaints made of the barbarous treatment of the Jews in Roumania and Russia. The Alliances becoming thus mere institutions for the establishment of schools—in itself a very laudable but not a very courageous or lofty undertaking—the Jews were forced to seek remedies within their own powers and guided by their own experiences. The end of the century now saw an attempt on a larger scale to give expression to this feeling of self-emancipation. The misery which refined legal persecution is bringing upon millions is growing hourly in the east of Europe, and the disappointment among the Jews of the West to find themselves, after years of toil and self-sacrifice, ruthlessly thrust back within the walls of a moral Ghetto, the uncertainty of the future combined with the self-consciousness and the feeling of national life which is slowly dawning upon the Jewish masses—although different from that in which they sought to be merged—all these contributed to endow the idea of resettlement in the old land of their fathers with a new and immediate signifi-

cance. The idea of establishing Jewish colonies in Palestine has gone through some stages already. It began on a serious basis in 1880, and Baron Edmond de Rothschild, of Paris, has contributed almost exclusively to the success which has attended these undertakings. Baron de Hirsch imitated the example, but sent his Jewish colonies to the Argentine. The Jewish Colonization Association, the heir to his fortune, partly reversed his policy and identified itself largely with the colonization of Palestine by Jews. The masses worked on parallel lines with these men, and out of their midst sprang the new movement known under the name of Zionism—that is, the return to Zion as a political unity.

We are standing at the beginning of this movement, which alone will assist in solving one of the most perplexing problems in modern sociology, will free Europe of an element which, in spite of all phrases to the contrary, is still considered as alien, and will be treated as such according to circumstances. There are some, among the richer Jews, who have vested interests and narrow conceptions; they are held fast in the meshes of self-delusion and cannot differentiate between the rights and duties of a citizen and the historical obligations of a national and religious life; they are still holding aloof from this movement. The vast masses, however, the sufferers and toilers of the earth, have rallied enthusiastically round it. In one way or another, realized sooner or later,

## JEWS AND JUDAISM

with the assistance of all, or carried out in spite of many, this is the sign under which Judaism enters the new century. Centrifugal tendencies have had their day; now is the time for centripetal concentration. This is the watchword of industrial interests, of political aspirations, and of national hopes. The Jews follow herein also the general trend of human activity.

It is idle to speculate at this juncture what the result may be for the progress of the higher ideals of mankind. A mighty wind of reaction is blowing all over Europe. We are moving on the downgrade plane leading from equality, fraternity, freedom, and right, to racial hatred, national exclusiveness, military brutalization, and dynastic tyranny; from the free and serene atmosphere of human faith to the swamps of mysticism, occultism, to the inquisition and the stake. But far away the dawn of a new life is visible, a new day which will disperse the shadows that are settling down, a day rising again from the regenerated East, from the Orient inhabited again by its own sons—Jews living a national life, competing for the best and working for the highest, blending the civilization of the West with the poetry of the East, and giving to mankind the message of better days—“*Ex Oriente lux.*”

M. GASTER.



**THE OUTLOOK FOR CHRIS-  
TIANITY**



## THE OUTLOOK FOR CHRISTIANITY

WHAT are the prospects of the Christian religion? What promise has it of retaining its hold upon the human race and extending its influence over the thought and life of men?

Voices which are supposed to be influential are frequently heard asserting the decadence of Christianity and predicting its speedy disappearance. That assertion and that prediction have been many times repeated, from the days of Celsus down to Bolingbroke and Diderot and Voltaire. In the mean time, the geographers have continued to find a place for Christianity on their maps, and the statisticians do not appear to be able to treat it as a neglectable quantity.

We are warned against putting our trust in figures. Numerical estimates of the growth of a religious system are not, indeed, conclusive. Its product must be weighed as well as counted. Yet the figures which show the expansion of Christianity as a world power can hardly be disregarded. For the early periods we have only estimates; but



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

it is at least an approximation to the truth to say that, at the end of the first century, there were in the world about five millions of nominal Christians; at the end of the tenth century, ten millions; at the end of the fifteenth, one hundred millions; at the end of the eighteenth, two hundred millions; at the end of the nineteenth, five hundred millions. The last century has added to the adherents of Christianity almost three times as many as were added during the first fifteen centuries. The rate of progress now is far more rapid than at any other period during the Christian era.

The population of the world is growing. The estimates are that, whereas in 1786 the dwellers on this planet numbered 954,000,000, in 1886 they were 1,483,000,000, an increase of fifty-four per cent. But the nominal Christians had increased during the same period more than one hundred per cent. The political strength of Christendom is not, however, represented by these figures. In 1786 a little more than one-third of the people of the world were under the government of Christian nations, and a little less than two-thirds were under the control of non-Christian nations; in 1886 fifty-five per cent. of the larger population were under Christian rule, and only forty-five per cent. under non-Christian rule.

The geographers put it in this way: In 1600 the inhabited surface of the earth measured about 43,798,600 square miles; of these, Christians occupied about 3,480,900, and non-Christians 40,-

## THE OUTLOOK FOR CHRISTIANITY

317,700. In 1894 the number of square miles inhabited was reckoned at 53,401,400, of which Christians held 45,619,100 and non-Christians 8,782,300.

These facts do not encourage the expectation that Christianity is about to disappear from the face of the earth. If the external signs could be trusted, there would be good reason for believing that the day is not far distant when it will take full possession of the earth.

We have been speaking of the political and geographical expansion of nominal Christianity—of the populations and the areas which are under the dominion of races and rulers who call themselves by the Christian name. It is to be remembered that, while nearly two-thirds of the world's population is now controlled by Christian powers, a large proportion of those under this control are not even nominal Christians. The governments of non-Christian races, as in India and Egypt and Siam, have been overthrown and supplanted by governments of the Christian powers. But nearly 500,000,000, or more than a third of the world's population, now bear the Christian name, and accept, in some more or less intelligible way, Christian theories and ideals.

Among these hundreds of millions there are many and various standards of belief and conduct. None of the great religions has a uniform cult or a single type of morality; Christianity is as far from this uniformity as any of the others. In

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

different races it has taken on different characters; if certain fundamental beliefs are universal, many variants of thought and sentiment appear in the different tribes and tongues. Perhaps Christianity follows the evolutionary laws, and employs variation as one of the elements of progress. It may be that its natural result is the production of a great variety of theories and practices, and that it depends on natural or spiritual selection to preserve the best.

Besides a number of minor sects, such as the Abyssinians, the Copts, the Armenians, the Nestorians, and the Jacobites, numbering in all four or five millions, we have the three grand divisions of Christendom—the Holy Orthodox Greek Church, with 98,000,000 adherents; the Protestant churches, with an aggregate of 143,000,000, and the Roman Catholic Church, with 230,000,000. No statistics are at hand showing the relative growth of the number of adherents of these three great divisions. But the growth of the populations under their rule is thus set forth by comparison: The Roman Catholics, in the year 1500, were ruling over 80,000,000 people; in 1700, over 90,000,000, and in 1891, over 242,000,000. The Greek Catholics, in 1500, were governing 20,000,000; in 1700, 33,000,000, and in 1891, 128,000,000. The Protestants, in 1500, had not begun to be; in 1700, they held sway over 32,000,000, and in 1891, over 520,000,000. In the four centuries the political power of the Roman Catholics has

## THE OUTLOOK FOR CHRISTIANITY

more than trebled, that of the Greeks has been multiplied by six, and that of the Protestants has sprung from nothing to a control of one-third of the world's population. It is easy to see which of these grand divisions is expanding most rapidly.

More important and more difficult is the question concerning the intellectual and moral progress of these three great sections of Christendom. It would be natural to judge that they must all be alive; such growth as they all report is a sign of life.

If we could trust Count Tolstoy, the Holy Orthodox Greek Church is not only moribund, but rotten. To this merciless idealist its shortcomings are crimes; no judgment more unsparing has been uttered since the days of John the Baptist than that with which he scourges the church in which he was reared. There must be some truth in this terrible arraignment; yet one cannot be quite confident that Tolstoy's criticisms are always judicial. Something there must be of saving power in this national church; the Russian people could not possess the moral vigor which their history constantly reveals if their religious life were as inane and degrading as Tolstoy paints it. As a writer of the last century said:

"One must actually stand in the Kremlin and Troitza before he fully realizes what a mighty, although latent, power the Greek Church still is, and how great a part it may have to play in the drama of human history. Inert, abject, superstitious, full of abuses, it undoubtedly is. It can hardly be said to have done anything for literature or for art; nothing,

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

at least, that has become famous beyond its own frontier; and yet a form of religion which has supported its adherents under the successive deluges of misery which flowed over Russia during the Middle Ages, and in spite of the dull weight of wretchedness which has weighed on the Russian peasant almost up to the present hour, has made him so gentle, so enduring, so tolerant, must have some not inconsiderable merits. Its education of a thousand years must have something to do with that inexhaustible gentleness which, in the words of Schedo-Ferroti, is the base of his character; with that incomparable sweetness of temper which causes his soul to reflect everything in a way different to that which we observe in the lower classes of other nations."

With some such judgment the philosophic observer would be compelled, no doubt, to temper the heat of Tolstoy's denunciation. Yet it must be confessed that the condition of the Greek Church to-day is less hopeful than that of any of her sister churches. If our regard were fixed on Russia, we should find faint encouragement for the expectation of the coming of Christ's spiritual kingdom. The union of church and state has resulted in the paralysis of spiritual life. The principle of Orthodoxy, which means the fixation of religious thought, has had its perfect work in Russia; withdrawal from the established church means disfranchisement and ostracism; and the result is deadly hypocrisy in high places and the blight of the intellect that deals with questions of religion. Nowhere else is religious reform so much needed as in Russia. Dissenters and schismatics there are, some twelve or fifteen millions of them; and

## THE OUTLOOK FOR CHRISTIANITY

there are quiet and kindly folk among them who appear to have returned to the simplicity of Christ. Against these, the persecutions of the state church are most bitterly waged. For the greater part, however, the schismatics and come-outers are a queer assortment, holding the most fantastic notions and practising some highly unsocial customs. The points in which the schismatics are at variance with the Orthodox Church are not always of great importance; some of their fiercest controversies have raged around such questions as whether the sign of the cross shall be made with two fingers or three, or whether the Hallelujah shall be said twice or thrice, or whether the cross shall have four arms or eight. That Christians, in the twentieth century, should regard such matters as of sufficient importance to justify them in setting up separate sects is only less astonishing than the fact that a state claiming to be Christian has scourged and imprisoned and slain its subjects by thousands for no other offence than adherence to these small ritual peculiarities.

The religious condition of Russia is little changed since the Middle Ages; the anomaly which it presents is that of a religious system remaining stationary, or nearly stationary, in the midst of a rapidly moving civilization. Even here, however, it is probable that a better knowledge of all conditions, past and present, would show that some progress has been made during the century. The emancipation of the serfs appears to have

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

been inspired by Christian sentiments; the condition of the dissenting sects has been considerably ameliorated, and it would be cynical to deny that the recent overtures of the czar for disarmament and arbitration drew part of their inspiration from the teachings of the Prince of Peace. The Russian Church has come far short of its high calling, but the light of the gospel has not been wholly extinguished, and we may hope to see a more rational and vital faith supplanting the obscurantism which so long has veiled its brightness.

The condition of the Roman Catholic Church is far more hopeful. It has had the good fortune, not altogether of its own choice, to be practically divorced, in many countries, for many years, from politics, and its freedom has resulted in a wholesome development of its life. Its intellectual and moral progress has been slowest in the countries in which it has had most to do with the government; its best gains have been made in those countries where it has been free to devote its energies to the spiritual concerns of its adherents. The Roman Catholic Church in the great Protestant countries—in Germany and England and the United States—has been making great progress; its people are receiving education; the standards of intelligence and of character are steadily rising among its clergy; it is exerting a conservative and salutary force upon the national life. With respect to what has been done for the protection of the family against the influences that are threatening its life,

## THE OUTLOOK FOR CHRISTIANITY

the Roman Catholic Church deserves all praise. During a recent lamentable recrudescence of Protestant bigotry on this continent, the moderation and wisdom of the Roman Catholic clergy and the Roman Catholic people won the grateful recognition of all good men. If they had not behaved much more like Christians than the zealots who filled the air with baseless lies about them, the land would have been deluged with blood. Such Roman Catholics as Kenrick and Williams and Gibbons and Ireland and Elder and Keane in this country, and Manning and Newman and Vaughan in England, represent a high order of intelligence and patriotism; and, under their wise leadership, the unhappy alienation between the two great branches of the Western Church is gradually disappearing.

It cannot be doubted that the Roman Catholic Church, as a whole, is sharing liberally in the growing light of this new day. It may be that its doctrine is technically irreformable, but interpretation is a great matter; and words may be taken, in one generation, in a very different sense from that which was given to them in a preceding generation. That the discipline of the church is gradually changing—becoming more mild and rational, less arbitrary and despotic—can hardly be doubted.

The chief additions to dogma which have been made during the past century are those proclaimed by the Vatican Council in 1870, the dogma of the



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, and the dogma of the infallibility and supremacy of the pope. The first of these possesses an interest mainly academical; the second seems to have much practical significance. But the political analogies suggest that concentration of power is apt to result in the enlargement of liberty. It was monarchy, as Guizot has shown, that led in free institutions. The king took the part of the people against the feudal lords. And it is at least conceivable that the strengthening of the papal prerogative will lead to important reforms, both in the doctrine and in the discipline of the Roman Catholic Church. If the present pope were twenty years younger, such results might well be looked for during his reign. For it is doubtful whether the throne at the Vatican has ever been occupied by a pontiff of purer purpose, broader wisdom, or larger charity than Leo XIII.

What, now, shall be said concerning the Protestant communions, whose numbers are so rapidly increasing and whose influence is so widely extending?

The Protestant principle of the right of private judgment has resulted in the multiplication of sects. Some variety of organization and ritual might well have grown from the sowing of the light; but the variation which would have appeared under normal conditions has undoubtedly been increased by human selfishness and ambition. It may be doubted whether the emphasis which has been placed

## THE OUTLOOK FOR CHRISTIANITY

upon the right of private judgment expresses a sound principle. In no kind of social organization are rights or liberties the primary concern. A family in which it is the first business of every member to assert his own rights, or to magnify his liberty, will not be a united and happy family. In the organic relations of the family, love and duty are fundamental—not rights and liberties.

We may awake, by and by, to the fact that the same thing is true of the state. The attempt to base a commonwealth upon a doctrine of rights will probably result in social disintegration. A community in which it is the first business of every citizen to assert his own rights will not continue to be peaceful and prosperous. The social and political disorders which threaten the life of the nation all spring from the fact that the people have been trained to think more of rights than of duties.

By misplacing the emphasis in the same way, Protestantism has introduced into its life a disintegrating element. Neither the right of private judgment nor any other right can be safely asserted as the foundation of the Christian Church. The foundation of the Church is loyalty to Christ and his kingdom; all rights are to be held and interpreted under that obligation. The failure to do this—the assertion of the individual will as against the common welfare—has rent the Church into fragments and multiplied creeds and organizations far beyond all the needs of varying tastes

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

and intellects. We may admit that this is the opprobrium of Protestantism; its power is lessened and its life is marred by these needless divisions, and by the unlovely competitions that spring from them. But the last years of the century have witnessed some serious attempts to correct these abuses; some of the separated sects have come together in unity; others are approaching each other with friendly overtures; the tendencies seem now to be towards reunion rather than division. In Great Britain the Nonconformist bodies have formed a strong federation by which they are able to act together for many common purposes, and movements are on foot to bring about a similar organization in this country. If the principle of differentiation has been over-accentuated during the nineteenth century, there is now some reason to hope that the twentieth century will reinforce the principle of integration; that loyalties will be emphasized as much as liberties, and the duty of co-operation rather more than the right of private judgment.

The past century has been a period of theological agitation and upheaval in Protestant Christendom. The progress of physical science, the rise of the evolutionary philosophy, and the development of Biblical criticism have kept the theologians busy with the work of reconstruction. Germany has been the theological storm-centre. Kant's tremendous work had been done before the century came in, but Herder and Hegel and Schleiermacher

## THE OUTLOOK FOR CHRISTIANITY

were digging away at the foundations in the early years, and those who have come after them have kept the air full of the noises of hammer and saw and chisel as the walls have been going up. Much of the theology "made in Germany" has appeared to be the product of the head rather than of the heart; formal logic deals rudely with the facts of the spiritual order. But the great theologians of the last half of the century, Dorner and Rothe and Nitzsch and Ritschl, although working on different lines, have abundantly asserted the reality of the spiritual realm; and it is now possible for the educated German to find a philosophy of religion which reconciles modern science with the essential facts of Christianity.

The most important religious movement of the nineteenth century in England is a reversion to sacramentalism, led by Newman and Pusey and William George Ward. Its ruling idea is that the sacraments have power in themselves to convey grace and salvation. This is essentially the doctrine of the old Church, and the movement gradually took on the form of a reaction; the adoration of the consecrated wafer, prayers for the dead, the use of incense—various Roman Catholic practices—were adopted one by one. In due time Newman and Faber and Ward entered the Catholic communion; since their departure, the ideas and practices for which they stood have been rapidly gaining ground in the English Church. How far this doctrinal reaction is likely to go, it would

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

not be safe to predict. But it must be said of the High Church party that it is not wasting all its energies upon vestments and ceremonies; it is taking hold, in the most energetic manner, of the problems of society; in hand-to-hand work with the needy and degraded classes it is doing more, perhaps, than has ever been done by any other branch of the Christian Church in England.

The remainder of the Protestants of Great Britain—the Broad Churchmen, the Nonconformists, the Scotch Presbyterians of the Established Church and of the United Free Church—with the entire Protestant body of the United States, have been subject to similar influences, and have been passing through similar theological transitions. Some branches of the Protestant Church have been greatly affected by the prevailing scientific and critical inquiries, and some have been less disturbed by them, but the intellectual ferment has reached most of them; and modifications, more or less radical, have been made in all their creeds.

These theological changes are not wholly due to the new conceptions of the world and of man which modern science has introduced. Some of them, and these not the least important, are the fruit of a purified ethical judgment. The dogmas of the Church, as Sabatier has shown, spring from the life of the Church. If the Spirit of Christ is abiding in the hearts of his disciples, their views of truth will be constantly purified and enlarged. Many of the changes in theological theory which

## THE OUTLOOK FOR CHRISTIANITY

have taken place within the past century are to be thus explained. The practical disappearance of the hard Calvinistic interpretations which were prevalent in most of the Reformed Churches one hundred years ago has resulted from the cultivation of humaner feelings and from a better conception of the nature of justice. Philosophically, the change consists in the substitution of righteousness for power in our definitions of the justice of God. The old theology emphasized the sovereignty of God in such a way as to make it appear that what was central in Him was will—His determination to have His own way. "His mere good pleasure" was the decisive element in His action. This theology was the apotheosis of will. The hard fact was disguised and softened in many ways, but it was always there; that was the nerve of the doctrine. The later conceptions emphasize the righteousness of God more than His power. His justice is not chiefly His determination to have His own way; it is His determination to do right, to recognize the moral constitution which He has given to His children, and to conform to that in His dealings with them. The assumption, nowadays, always is that of Abraham—that the Judge of all the earth will do right, that which will commend itself as right to the unperverted moral sense of His children. Theology has been ethicized; that is the sum of it. To-day it is a moral science; one hundred years ago it was not. This is a tremendous change; none more radical or

*Ethical  
Change in  
Theology.*

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

revolutionary has taken place in any of the sciences. To be rid of theories which required the damnation of non-elect infants and of all the heathen; which imputed the guilt of our progenitors to their offspring; and which proclaimed an eternal kingdom of darkness, ruled by an evil potentate, whose ubiquity was but little short of omnipresence, whose resources pressed hard upon omnipotence, and whose access to human souls implied omniscience—is a great deliverance. The entire aspect of religion has changed within the memory of many who will read these words. We are living under a different sky, and breathing a different atmosphere. That these horrible doctrines are obsolete is manifest from the fact that the great Scotch Presbyterian Churches have explained them away, and that their American brethren are slowly making haste to be free of them. It is long since they have been preached to intelligent congregations.

The progress of Biblical criticism during the last quarter of the past century has been rapid and sometimes disquieting. Much work of a somewhat fanciful character has been done, but a large number of important conclusions are accepted by most scholars. The prevailing teaching in the theological seminaries of the Evangelical Churches is that the Bible contains a revelation from God, in historical and prophetic documents of priceless value, holding truth found nowhere else, and making known to us the way and the truth and the life; but that this revelation comes

*For balance of  
Higher Criticism*

## THE OUTLOOK FOR CHRISTIANITY

through human mediation, and is not free from human imperfection; that, while its spiritual elements may be spiritually discerned, its parts are not of equal value, and that it is dangerous to impute to the whole book an infallibility which it nowhere claims. The new conception of the Bible has undoubtedly given a shock to many devout minds, who have been accustomed to regard it with superstitious veneration; and those who have been convinced by the arguments of the critics have not all learned to use it as it was meant to be used—to draw inspiration from it, instead of reading inspiration into it. Those who will seek to be inspired by it will find that it is inspired, because it is inspiring; and there is reason to hope that the Bible may yet prove, under the new theories of its origin, a better witness for God than ever before. It is well that He should not any longer be held responsible for the human crudities and errors which it contains.

The great development of the natural sciences and the rise of the evolutionary theories have also had their effect upon Christian theology. That there are vast numbers of Protestant Christians who have been scarcely touched by these influences is true; but these influences are shaping the thought of the world, and it is impossible that the theology of a living Church should not be profoundly affected by them. For natural science is simply telling us what God is doing in His world, and evolution is simply explaining the way in which

*Influence of evolution*



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

His work is done. At bottom, all this is religious truth, of the most fundamental character; and, if Christian theology is true theology, it must include the truths of science and of evolution.

Such an inclusion makes needful some important reconstructions of theological theory. It substitutes for our mechanical theories of creation the thought of the immanent God, who, in the words of Paul, is above all and through all and in us all; nay, it gives us also that doctrine of the immanent Christ—the Logos, the infinite reason and love, of whom the same apostle speaks in words of such wonderful significance: "in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins; who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together."\* If the Christ-element, the element of self-sacrificing love, is the very matrix of the creation, then it ought not to surprise us if we find in nature itself the elements of sacrifice; and we do find them there, when we look for them. Over against the struggle for life is the struggle for the life of others; vicariousness is at the heart of nature. We begin to discern some deep meaning in the mystical saying that Christ represents

\* Col. i. 14-17.

## THE OUTLOOK FOR CHRISTIANITY

"the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," and we are able to see that He came to fulfil not merely the Levitical law, but the very law of life. All this has been, as yet, but imperfectly worked out in our theological theories; but it begins to be evident that the doctrine of the Incarnation will find, in the doctrine of evolution, an interpretation far more sublime than any which was possible under the mechanical theories of creation.

In the development of Protestantism on its intellectual side there have been losses as well as gains. Where such liberty of thinking is allowed, there will be wild and foolish thinking; it is often forgotten that the principle of reason is the principle of unity, and not of division or denial. There is a reasonless conservatism, which clings to beliefs long after they have ceased to be credible; and there is a rash radicalism, which throws away truth untested. Protestant theology has suffered from both these causes. There has always been, and there still is, much shallow thinking; and, in the transitions which have been taking place, some have lost their faith. But there is good reason for believing that the Christians of to-day have as hold as firm as those of any former day upon essential Christian truth.

On the side of life and practice, there have also been gains and losses. In some of the elements of the religious life we may be poorer than our forefathers were. There is not so much reverence now as once there was; but there is less of slavish

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

fear. There is less intense devotional feeling; but there are also fewer cases of hopeless religious melancholy. We do not make so much of the Lord's day as men once did in some sections; that is an undoubted loss. Yet there was a gloom and restraint in that old observance which we should be slow to recall. We do not, perhaps, quite adequately estimate the amount of irreligion which prevailed in this country in the early days of the nineteenth century. A careful historical comparison would reassure those who suppose that we are in danger of losing all our religion.

The development of the Protestant Churches has been intensive as well as extensive; the work of the local Church has greatly broadened. The Church of to-day is a far more efficient instrument for promoting the Kingdom of God in the world than was the Church of one hundred years ago. At that date the Sunday-school work was just beginning; the Church did nothing for its own members but to hold two services on a Sunday, and sometimes a week-night service. In fact, it may be said that the Church did nothing at all; all the religious work was done by the minister. The conception that the Church is a working body, organized for the service of the community, had hardly entered into the thought of the minister or of the members. It was rather an ark of safety, in which men found temporary shelter on their way to heaven.

The larger work, outside of its immediate fold,

## THE OUTLOOK FOR CHRISTIANITY

was not contemplated. In 1800 there was no Foreign Missionary Society in existence on this continent, and no Bible Society; a few feeble Home Missionary Societies had just been formed. There was no religious newspaper in the world. The vast outreaching work of Christian education and Christian publication had not entered into the thought of the churches. Such efficient arms of the Christian service as the Young Men's and the Young Women's Christian Associations, the Societies of Christian Endeavor, and the Salvation Army are of recent origin.

What, then, shall we say of the equipment with which Christianity sets forth, at the beginning of the twentieth century, for the conquest of the world? Its geographical and political advantages have been named. What of its intellectual and spiritual resources? What of the appeal which it is prepared to make to the mind and heart of man?

It may be assumed that man is not only a political, but also a religious, animal; that religion is an everlasting reality. Some kind of religion men have always had and will always have; things unseen and eternal enter into their lives, and will always form an integral part of their experience. We can hardly look for the invention of a new religion. Are any of the other existing religious systems more likely than Christianity to satisfy the needs of humanity? Each of these religious systems contains great elements of truth

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

and power. Is any one of them better fitted than Christianity to meet the wants of the human soul?

Christianity has lost some of the weapons with which it was doing battle one hundred years ago. Its trust is not to be henceforth in an infallible book; the arsenal of its terrors has been despoiled of much that was once a great reliance; censure and coercion can no longer be profitably employed. But, in some respects, it has been strengthened for the work before it.

The Christian doctrine has been greatly simplified. The elaborate creeds of a former day are disappearing. The metaphysical puzzles, in which so many minds were once entangled, are swept away. It is now well understood, among those who are the recognized leaders of Christian thought, that the essence of Christianity is personal loyalty to the Master and obedience to His law of love. Such a conception prepares the way for great unities and co-operations.

The doctrine of the divine immanence, when once its deeper implications are understood, must have important results in Christian experience. The God in whom we live and move and have our being will not need to be certified by documents or symbolized by sacraments or demonstrated by logic; our knowledge of Him will be immediate and certain. If He is, indeed, the Life of all life; if He is "more present to all things He made than anything unto itself can be"; if He is "the stream of tendency, whereby all things fulfil the law of

## THE OUTLOOK FOR CHRISTIANITY

their being"; if He is really "working in us, to will and to do of His good pleasure," then life possesses a sacredness and a significance which few of us have yet conceived. This truth sanctifies and glorifies the whole of life. It is the truth which lies at the heart of what is known as the "new theology"; and, if the Christian pulpit can but grasp it and realize it, we shall have such a revival of religion as the world has never seen.

The God who is over all and through all and in us all is known to the Christian Church of to-day as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is through the spirit that we know Him, and He is the Father of spirits; His character is revealed to us in the life and words of Jesus; our relation to Him is shown us in the filial trust of Jesus, and our relation to one another springs from this relation. The two truths of the divine Fatherhood and the human Brotherhood are the central truths of Christian theology to-day. This has never before been true. Men have always been calling God Father, but in their theories they have been making Him monarch. He was as much of a Father as He could be consistently with his functions as an absolute sovereign. The sovereignty was the dominant fact; the Fatherhood was subordinate. All this is changed. It is believed to-day that there can be no sovereignty higher than fatherhood, and no law stronger than love.

The doctrine must have vast social consequences. When it is once fully accepted, and all that it im-

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

plies is recognized and enforced, society will be regenerated and redeemed. If all men are, indeed, brothers, and owe to one another, in every relation, brotherly kindness; if there is but one law of human association—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"; if every man's business in the world is to give as much as he can, rather than to get as much as he can, then the drift of human society must now be in wrong directions, and there is need of a reformation which shall start from the centres of life and thought. We need not so much new machinery, as new ideals of personal obligation.

This idea that Christ has come to save the world; that His mission is not to gather his elect out of the world and then burn it up, but to establish the Kingdom of Heaven here, and that it is established by making the law of love the regulative principle of all the business of life, is practically a new idea. Many, here and there, have tentatively held it, and their faltering attempts to live by it have produced what we have had of the precious fruits of peace and good will among men. Charity and philanthropy have not been unknown; the spirit of Christ has found in them a beautiful expression; within that realm the Kingdom of Heaven has been set up. What we need to learn is the truth that the law of love governs the factory as well as the hospital; that the statesman and the economist must reckon with it, no less than the preacher and philanthropist.

## THE OUTLOOK FOR CHRISTIANITY

Such is the issue which the logic of events is forcing upon the Christian Church. Christianity must rule or abdicate. If it cannot give the law to society, the world has no need of it. Not by might nor by power can its empire be established; only by clear witnessing to the supremacy of love. But the time has come when there must be no faltering in this testimony. Hitherto, it has hardly dared to say that Love is King; the kingdoms of this world have been conceded to Mammon. With the dawning of the new century comes the deepening conviction that the rule of Mammon never can bring order and peace; and it begins to be credible that the way of the Christ is the way of life, for industry as well as for charity, for nations as well as for men.

That the principle of the Christian morality is the foundation of the social order, and that society will never be at peace until it rests on this foundation, is the claim which Christianity is now prepared to make. The ground of our hope for the continuance and prevalence of the Christian religion lies in the conviction that it will be able to make good this claim.

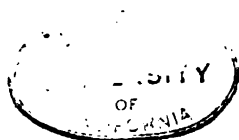
WASHINGTON GLADDEN.





# **CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY**





## CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY

ONE of the most ancient images of the Christian Church is that of a ship tossed about on the waves, yet never sinking. This image was painted more than once on the walls of the Roman catacombs, precisely when it seemed as if Christianity could not possibly hold out much longer against the impact of social and juridical forces that had sworn its extermination. Nevertheless, the Fisherman of Galilee, with his brethren, survived this first great hurricane of opposition, and planted the victorious symbol of the new religion on the Capitol and the Palatine—over the shrine of Roman religion, and amid the councils of the Roman state. On the morrow of this first great reckoning of the new spirit in mankind with the old established forms of belief and government, a tremor of astonishment seized on the priests and philosophers of the pagan world, that an obscure Syrian sect should have at last lifted a triumphant head. It seemed as though all the *criteria* of mankind—common-sense, logic, reason, history, analogy—were at once and hopelessly shattered, and a wonder-world set up in the place of the familiar

realities of society. It is an old story how the few remaining pagans hoped against hope, until they saw the fall of the whole fabric of Western civilization, and the figure of a Universal Church interposed between organized society and the elemental forces of barbarism that threatened it from the North and East. In those all-embracing arms, the world of Greece and Rome, that thought to perish doubly, was firmly seized and made to live again.

Since that day Christianity has dominated all modern history. Its morality, based on the loving kindness of an Eternal Father and the mystic brotherhood with the God-Man, has renovated the face of the earth. It has set firmly the corner-stone for all future civilization, the conviction of a common humanity that has been deeply rooted in us by no stoicism, but by the story of Jesus Christ and by the lives and deaths of countless Christian men and women. It has clarified at once the sense of sin and the reasons for hope. It has touched the deepest springs of efficient conviction; preached successfully, in season and out of season, of mercy and justice and peace; affected intimately every function of domestic life; thrown a sheltering veil of sanctity about maid and mother and home; stood out against the fierce ambitions and illicit loves of rulers and the low passions of the multitude. It has healed and cleansed whole legislations, and "filled out with a vivifying spirit" the noble

## CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY

but inorganic letter of great maxims that a Seneca or an Epictetus might utter, but could not cause to live. It has distinctly raised the social and civil life of all civilized humankind. It bears within itself the antidote of a certain divine presence, whereby it overcomes forever those germs of decay and change that cause the death of all other societies. Its earliest writers and exponents had a subtle sense of its true character, when they took over from paganism, and applied to the work of Jesus, the symbolic myth of the phoenix, emblem of a native organic and indestructible vitality.

If we believe the eminent statistician, Mr. Michael G. Mulhall, the population of the world in 1898 was 1,450,000,000. Of these, 764,500,000 were yet pagans, nearly all located in Asia (667,800,000) and in Africa (91,000,000). In Europe there are none who can be officially described as pagans; in Oceanica there are 4,400,000, and in America 1,300,000. Therefore, on its oldest and most favorable field, the only tenable forms of paganism have gone down absolutely before the shining of Christian truth, a symbol of what we may hope for in the future over the two continents yet addicted to paganism. The Christians of the world number 501,600,000, of whom 348,500,000 belong to Europe, 126,400,000 to America, with a scattering of 12,600,000 in Asia, 4,400,000 in Africa, 9,700,000 in Oceanica. That is, the most enlightened and progressive portion of the Old World, Europe, with its noble adult daughter in the New

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

World, is still entirely Christian, after nearly sixteen centuries of external struggle against the forces of barbarism and Islam, and internal struggles of the deepest and most momentous nature. As the future of humanity rests henceforth in the hands of the men who guide, politically and intellectually, the society of Europe and the New World of North and South America, I cannot but see in this distribution and preponderance of the Christian masses an omen of great hopefulness for the future of the religion of Jesus Christ. I know that there is not now that absolute unity of the Christian multitudes that once existed and is yet the necessary, indispensable, ideal condition of that religion. I shall come directly to this fundamental point. But I feel justified in believing that, among these five hundred millions of Christians, there are rough, imperfect, unfinished unities of tradition, practice, and spirit; that they all look up to the Son of Mary as the Redeemer of humanity; that He marks for them the true line of delimitation between the Old and the New; that in and through Him is the firm bond of union that holds us all to a common Father, a Giver of all good things, and a purifying, inflaming Spirit, that acts in a manifold but mystic manner on all who have in any way confessed that Jesus Christ is True God and True Man.

Were this unity perfect among Christians, there can be no doubt that long since the whole world would have been won over to the Gospel of

## CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY

Jesus, that its sweet influences would have transmuted all the hardness and imperfections of our common humanity, by lifting us all into that higher spiritual sphere of brotherhood with the Redeemer of our souls, and sonship with the Head of our race. It is this lack of unity among Christians that makes it even possible for any other religion, old or new, to set up a comparison with it, to challenge its immortal titles to admiration and acceptance. For lack of unity, the impact of the missionary labors is broken, and the incredible sacrifices of Christian men and women must be repeated, often in vain, from generation to generation. This defect of our Christianity it is which enables the savage man, as well as the man of a foreign culture, to escape the arguments and appeals of the Christian apostle. It also renders almost nugatory the efforts of Christianity, on its original soil, to dominate even the most tangible forces of the world and the devil.

The life and teaching of Jesus Christ himself have nothing but victories to chronicle since His appearance among men. Every century is a new campaign from which He returns to the Heavenly Father, crowned with innumerable laurels, and leading captive innumerable multitudes of human souls. The records of history are full of the most astonishing conquests by Him of individual souls, voluntary submissions to the irresistible charm of the Son of Man. There is no altitude of intellect so towering that it has not bent before Him, no



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

seat of power so high that it has not done homage to Him. Philosophy and criticism, history and the natural sciences, have sent over to Him, without ceasing, their noblest worthies as pledges of victory. To go no further back than the century just elapsed, we may say that every page of its annals is bright with the illustrious names of great men who have been proud to confess the divinity of Jesus. Some of them never knew a wavering of allegiance; others came back to Him by a kind of postliminary process, having learned by hard experience the truth of the apostolic cry of Saint Peter: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." \* From this point of view there is never any diminution of the work of Jesus Christ. His benign and gracious figure dominates forever all life and society. Scarcely, indeed, was He known to the world when we are told that He won the personal admiration of great Roman emperors like Tiberius and Hadrian and Alexander Severus. Sweet legends of the veneration of an Augustus and an Abgar cling forever to His person—symbols of that constant self-surrender in love and adoration which has gone on since then, and will cease no more.

What is the secret of this constant and cosmopolitan devotion to Jesus? From what deep springs of history and human nature do the forces flow that keep it forever alive, in spite of the multitudinous accidents of time and space and change

\* John vi. 69.

## CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY

that affect so thoroughly all other phenomena of life? *Securus judicat orbis terrarum*. It can be no slight bond that holds forever such elastic and elusive forces as the minds and hearts of men, in varying epochs and lands, periods, forms and degrees of culture. To all Catholics, it is as simple as the sun that shines in the heavens, or as the air we breathe.

To us, the religion of Jesus Christ—for we maintain, on the authority of the gospels, that He founded a religion—is no vague resultant of world-forces that found their proper time and suitable expression in the Son of Mary. Indeed, the first great domestic struggle of the new religion was against just those loose, unclear forces of Gnosticism and Eclecticism that desired to fasten their dying causes to the vigorous young body of Christian Faith, but which she repelled with clear consciousness of their desire and of her repugnance. To us, Christianity is no philosophy, however elevated and potent, but a divine thing in the sense of an immediate, positive revelation. Hence, in its earliest documents, it is known as "The Name," "The Work," "The Manifestation" of an Omnipotent Divine Will, the closest and sublimest bond that can unite the divinity with mankind. From among the philosophers of the world, there could never come a Redeemer. And this is precisely what we welcome in Jesus Christ, the figure and the office of a Divine Atoner for the sins of the world, the

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

Saviour of mankind from the inherited and actual burden of sin.

X Hence it is that Christianity is the most intensely personal of all religions. It presumes, as no other, the unwavering belief in and concern for an immortal and responsible individual soul, the confession of an Omniscient and All-Just Judge, a known and possible code of conduct, and a clearly apprehended sanction that waits upon the violation or neglect of that code. The ideal of the individual Christian is the imitation of Jesus Christ, "the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, . . . the head of all principality and power, . . . for in Him dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead corporally."\* And, inasmuch as He realizes in His own person and circle of influence this sublime model, Christianity may be said to live or die for Him.

But how shall the individual follower of Jesus know His will, and, knowing it, follow it perfectly? For this purpose Jesus formed a visible society, destined to embrace all who would accept Him as God and Master. He gave it the power to reproduce and continue itself, and conveyed to it the custody of His teaching and the example of His life, with vicarious authority to interpret both in time of need, and to decide with finality. To its court of appeal He indicated not only the letter but the spirit of its procedure. He assured this society of His helpful presence forever, and

\* Col. i. 18; ii. 9, 10.

## CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY

also of the direction and guidance of the Holy Spirit. He foretold for it a career of great trial and sorrow, but also foreshadowed for it periods of triumph and glory. But, above all, He imposed on it the absolute condition of unity. This is evident, not only from all His devices of constitution and description throughout the gospels, but, in a very particular manner, from the great lyrical, almost dithyrambic, monologue in which, on the eve of His Atonement, He pours forth the very soul of prayer to the Heavenly Father.\* Here the underlying motif is unity, that shadow of the divine life, the condition of the new sanctity, the mark and proof of genuine Christianity.

“ And not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in me :

That they all may be one, as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee : that they also may be one in us : that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

And the glory which thou hast given me, I have given to them : that they may be one, as we also are one.”

Elsewhere, He insists that there shall be one fold and one shepherd, that whoever gathers not with Him scattereth, that whoever receives His disciples “ receives me and Him who sent me.” There can be no doubt, then, as to an effective will of Jesus that this society should be one to the end of time, and among all kinds and conditions of men. It was also to be holy and stainless, imperishable and all - glorious, self - identical and

\* John xvii. 20-23.

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

self-witnessing; but the note of unity predominates throughout. His prophetic soul forecasts and denounces every attempt to rend this unity, as the chief obstacle to the success of His life and teaching among men, as the great stumbling-block, the creators of which He will hold eminently responsible in the last great accounting.

Now, when we enter upon the last century of the mystic cycle of two thousand years during which the gospel of Jesus has been preached, principally by and through this society which is His Holy Church,\* we seize with a terrible earnestness and directness the meaning of Christ's language about unity. Just as that note dominates all others in the gospels, so does its infringement or diminution dominate the history of His Church, the public propagation of His saving and consoling teachings. The avowedly anti-Christian forces of the past two centuries could never have scored their triumphs were it not for the mighty cleft that divided Protestant from Catholic Christendom. While conflict ran high as to the points on which they differed, the enemy was pillaging such parts of the original estate as they yet held in common. The Christian Church was, truly, the mother of all modern happiness and liberty; yet a minority of rebels or apostates was allowed to set aside her claims, to contaminate all the sources of public and private education, to enlist against her the literature and the arts that she had saved and

\* Eph. v. 27.

## CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY

cherished in a night of storm and disaster. And all this, because centuries of unhappy division had accustomed both Catholics and Protestants to look to one another only for suspicion and coldness and uncharity. Truly, the divine eye of Jesus saw well through the ages, and what He saw could only have intensified His will to base His Church upon a rock of unity that could not be overthrown. Could we restore to-day the former unity of all Christian peoples, with what ease we could look forth to the lifting of China to the highest plane of Christian welfare and culture! Could we be once more as in the fifteenth century, with what ease could the gospel of the Prince of Peace be preached throughout Africa from the lips of united brethren, and not amid the horrors of injustice and war that are leaving their ominous, red tracks across every newly opened land! So, too, if there were again the old-time unity of East and West, what a quickening there could be of the slumbering forces of the Greek Church, and what a useful race the Coptic Christians would be for the evangelization of Darkest Africa! Whatever way we look, the functions of unity seem so great and valuable that all the reasons which in the past operated to destroy it are pushed into the background, as no longer worthy of consideration. Indeed, as time wears on, and men take a broader and more philosophic view of things, it will be seen that each individual schism or heresy was less necessary or justifiable, in the light of the magnificent horizon of possible efforts

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

and enterprises that is now dawning upon us, but to which we are unable to reach by reason of our lack of thorough and durable unity. Can any genuine Christian contemplate with equanimity the sad results that the Monophysitism of the fifth and sixth centuries has entailed upon the churches of the Orient by its substantial contribution to the success of Islam, and thereby upon all Christian society, mediæval and modern? There is in all such cases an encysting of the general Christian spirit and strength, a gradual hardening and crystallizing of all those currents of enthusiasm and daring that once poured in from the great main flow of Christian grace, a steady uplifting of walls of separation that can only render more narrow, if in some cases more deep and intense, the tides of Christian life, thought, endeavor.

To the Catholic, the unity of the Church, that especial desire of Jesus Christ, is based upon the Rock of Peter. He finds the reasons for his belief in the Petrine headship of the Apostolic College, in the special promises and privileges accorded to Peter by Our Lord, in the peculiar activity of Peter and the pre-eminence that he obtains in the inspired records of primitive Christian life. No other See than that of Peter ever laid claim to a hegemony over Christianity, while, from the earliest days, that See claimed this supreme ascendancy. The last chapters of St. Clement's epistle to the Corinthians (*circa* A.D. 96), the almost contemporary epistle of St. Ignatius of Antioch to the Romans,

## CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY

the famous description by St. Irenæus of the Roman Church as the oldest, greatest, most glorious, and most authoritative of all the apostolic churches, are only a few among many indications of the right of supreme leadership that archaic Christian society adjudged to the See of Rome.

Doubtless, in the infancy of Christendom, this supremacy was chiefly visible in the mystic pomp of martyrdom and the organized services of charity. But it was an organic and native right, and could therefore adapt itself, as it did, to all the actual needs of Christian society, as they developed from internal growth or under pressure from without. The little pseudo-Cyprian tract, *Against Gamesters*, is an index that, before Constantine, they claimed to rule the "Power of the Keys." In its spirit, this very ancient discourse of a Roman bishop does not differ from any formula of Leo the Great. Yet Eusebius is guarantee that this power was chiefly exercised over the churches by acts of charity that extended from the apostolic times down to his own day. I need not rehearse the functions of Rome at a later period, in repressing the most disruptive, anti-Christian heresies, in the conversion and instruction of the barbarians, in the formation of their rulers and their laws, in the uplifting and idealizing of the incipient national lives of France, Germany, England, and Spain. Writing in 1808, Tobler could say that, without the papacy, there would not have remained in the world any universal religion, faith would have entirely dis-



## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

appeared. And the contemporary Swiss historian, the great Johann von Müller, could write that their paternal hands held up bravely the whole hierarchy, and at the same time preserved the liberty of all the states of Europe. "It was the pope who restrained and governed, by means of the principles of religion and the fear of God, the bold, unbridled youth of our modern states." The Gregories, Alexanders, and Innocents of the Middle Ages were, indeed, as a wall against the torrent of absolutism that then threatened to invade the whole earth. If, in the weakness of mediæval, popular organization, the insidious despotism of the Orient failed to prevail in the courts of the West, it was because the violent and lascivious nobles were forever held in check by the fear or the respect of him who sat in the chair of Peter. And, when the awful cataclysm of the Reformation took place, it was still the insight, genius, and energy of Rome that kept intact a solid phalanx of Catholicism, through all the defections and apostasies of a century.

The average non-Catholic does not easily seize the point of view from which the Roman Catholic looks on the pope. To us, he is the divinely appointed High Court of Appeals of Christendom, the "*Dominus Apostolicus*," or living embodiment of the supreme, vicarious authority of the Apostolic College. Hence, we measure the progress or decay of the Christian cause and interest, very largely, by the condition of the Roman See. It is for us

## CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY

the working heart of Christendom. And the words of affection and veneration that we use when speaking of it we believe to be justified by its eminently paternal character and spirit, its origin, its age, its manifold experience, its countless services to the virtuous and the oppressed, its supranational functions. For its sake, we have imitated the Geux of Holland, and converted a title of reproach into a title of distinction. Every Catholic bishop knows, by history and by instinct, that his strength and dignity are dependent on the strength and dignity of the pope. And the latter knows, in turn, that his first duty is the confirmation of the bishops in faith and enthusiasm.\*

The last great storm through which our Catholic Christianity has gone was the French Revolution. The brunt of this was borne by the See of Rome. Two popes, Pius VI. and Pius VII., learned in their own persons what the agony and the glory of martyrdom are like. To their personal courage and independence is very largely owing the recrudescence of Catholic affection for a See which, in these bishops, showed itself truly apostolic. We consider that it is owing to the extreme watchfulness and foresight of the popes in this century that schism and heresy have been so little in evidence. More than one source or cause of these great disruptions has showed itself. But, from whatever quarter the danger threatened, it was conquered by the action of the Apostolic See. In

\* Luke xxii. 31, 32.

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

the mean time the numbers of its adherents have grown with the growth of the world, and may be set down at the opening of the twentieth century as more than one-half of the five hundred millions who bear the name of Christians.\* Nowhere, perhaps, is this phenomenal growth more noticeable than among the English-speaking peoples. From the most insignificant place in the statistics of Catholicism, they have come in this century to count nearly two hundred and fifty bishops, in a total of less than one thousand; and, from a handful of believers outside of Ireland, to be more than twenty-one millions, with over twenty-one thousand priests and more than eighteen thousand churches.†

To this large and compact body, habituated to look on Christianity as a living organism of which they are integrant parts, the pope represents all the counsel, experience, sympathy, glory, and also the sufferings of the past. No other figure in the modern world so rouses the hearts of men as the venerable bishop who dwells in the Vatican, the Shepherd of Humanity, the only voice that to-day,

\* At the late Australasian Catholic Congress, Mr. Michael G. Mulhall declared that, of the 501,600,000 Christians in the world, 290,000,000 were Roman Catholics.

† In a work lately published by Messrs. Swan & Sonnenschein, of London, I find the following statistics of conversions to Catholicism within fifty years from among the higher classes of English society: "Since 1850," it is there said, "the persons who have gone over to the Church of Rome include 445 graduates of Oxford, 213 of Cambridge, and 63 of other universities, besides 27 peers, 244 military officers, 162 authors, 129 lawyers, and 60 physicians. Among the graduates were 446 clergymen of the Established Church."

## CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY

in the midst of universal religious decay, can✓  
speak to all society with an archaic authority, an  
unparalleled experience, and a universal good-  
will that all must recognize, if they do not obey.  
His genuine wrongs and sufferings must some  
day be redressed, for they have an intimate re-  
lationship with the wrongs and sufferings that  
the common people everywhere loudly proclaim  
that they themselves are compelled to bear. It  
is an eternally true law of history that any signal  
violation of justice avenges itself eventually upon  
all human society, and demands an equally signal  
reparation.

Catholic students of history and politics agree  
that there is a remarkable unity of purpose and  
means, a keenness and directness of vision, in  
the onslaughts which were made upon the papacy  
during the past century, and that ended in the  
utter destruction of its public status as a civil  
power. But they know, too, that the peace, hap-  
piness, and prosperity assured by the doctrinaires  
and sectaries of the whole century are not yet the  
lot of that nation which has been built over the  
grave of the pope's old and venerable political  
authority. They rightly suspect, from the analogy  
of the past, the character of the peoples of the penin-  
sula, and the scope of those who yet detain his  
political authority, that the measure of the popular  
sufferings of Italy is not filled up. On the other  
hand, the peoples of all Europe are threatened with  
evils of the same nature. The men who sit in the

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

high places of these nations speak with little hope of the near future. Militarism, that has always ended in despotism, and a godless industrialism, that must needs breed popular envy and hatred, lift their heads with pride and assurance of future domination. Again an era of force, cloaked but poorly by a coarse luxury and license, dawns upon the Continental nations, with all its sure subversion of hardly conquered popular rights and liberties, and the equally sure retaliation of the oppressed.

The Roman Catholic is convinced that all these evils which seriously threaten Christian Europe are owing to the popular neglect of the simple and sane principles of the gospel, their quasi-official expulsion from public life, the fatal assumption that there can be a sufficient and working morality without religion and worship—that is, without public recognition of God, as Creator, Father, Provider, and Saviour. To him, the symbol of this secular activity is the degradation and humiliation of the one great force that stood publicly and officially for the historic Christian morality. We recognize and welcome those numerous voices from outside our fold that daily join themselves to us in regretting the destruction of a supreme moral tribunal among Christians that could alone efficiently avert the evils of war, alone persuade whole peoples to a hearty reconciliation. But we listen with greater veneration to those words of Leo XIII., in his late encyclical on Jesus Christ, in which the august nonagenarian, himself one of

## CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY

the few survivors of the century, points out the dangers of the future and mingles with his warning the words of remedy :

“ So great is this struggle of the passions and so serious the dangers involved that we must either anticipate ultimate ruin or seek for an efficient remedy. It is, of course, both right and necessary to punish malefactors, to educate the masses, and by legislation to prevent crime in every possible way ; but all this is by no means sufficient. The salvation of the nations must be looked for higher. A power greater than human must be called in to teach men’s hearts, awaken in them the sense of duty, and make them better. This is the power which once before saved the world from destruction when groaning under much more terrible evils. Once remove all impediments and allow the Christian spirit to revive and grow strong in a nation, and that nation will be healed. The strife between the classes and the masses will die away ; mutual rights will be respected. If Christ be listened to both rich and poor will do their duty. The former will realize that they must observe justice and charity, the latter self-restraint and moderation, if both are to be saved. Domestic life will be firmly established by the salutary fear of God as the lawgiver.”

The Roman Catholic believes that no teacher of morality that the world knows, or could create, can ever speak a more true and noble language, or emphasize his teaching with greater authority and experience. Every word is coined out of the common Christian treasury of truth, and is received as such by more than one-half of Christendom, not only because it corresponds to the written records of the life of Christ, but because it comes from the mouth of one whom He has set up among

## GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

us as His authorized witness, exponent, and mouth-piece. With equal masterliness, the pope touches on the original sin of our public life—its rejection of the spirit of Jesus, as manifested in the gospel and the history of Christianity:

“ In the same way the precepts of the natural law, which dictates respect for lawful authority and obedience to the laws, will exercise their influence over the people. Seditions and conspiracies will cease. Wherever Christianity rules over all without let or hinderance, there the order established by Divine Providence is preserved, and both security and prosperity are the happy result. The common welfare, then, urgently demands a return to Him from whom we should never have gone astray; to Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life—and this on the part not only of individuals, but of society as a whole. We must restore Christ to this His own rightful possession. All elements of the national life must be made to drink in the life which proceedeth from Him—legislation, political institutions, education, marriage and family life, capital and labor. Every one must see that the very growth of civilization which is so ardently desired depends greatly upon this, since it is fed and grows not so much by material wealth and prosperity as by the spiritual qualities of morality and virtue.”

I am aware that the obstacles in the way of the unity of Christendom are very great, and that to many minds they seem hopeless. Nevertheless, it is possible; perhaps, if our prayers were fervent enough, this incalculable boon would be again granted, that we might all own one God, one faith, one baptism. Thereby, we would again bring to bear upon the new life that opens before mankind the benign, regenerating influences of the ex-

## CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY

ample and the teachings of our Lord, but this time with the impact of a common unity. Even Melancthon recognized its necessity; and for many years the theologians of the Reformation were occupied with the bases of such a step as might have been the noblest act of the sixteenth century. The hope clung to life in the hearts of Grotius, Leibnitz, George Calixtus. In the Anglican Church, Laud, and perhaps Usher, cherished the same desire. It has lived a cryptic life in Oxford, and among a small number of the more spiritual Anglican clergy. Very noble souls, like Ambrose de Lisle Philips, have given themselves to the furtherance of the ideal. Societies exist in Germany and France for that purpose—societies of prayer, persuasion, and example. The popes have never ceased to solicit officially the wandering families of Christendom to come back within the common fold; and, while the Church cannot sacrifice the truth of her teaching, in all other ways the return would be made easy. She has only deep sorrow and abundant tears for the dissensions of Christendom, knowing well that they are the chief cause of the persecutions it undergoes, the delay of its triumph over the hearts and souls of men, and the rejoicings of its eternal enemies that at last they have fixed the limits of its influence and marked the hour of its downfall and ruin.

J. CARD. GIBBONS.

THE END

4:30

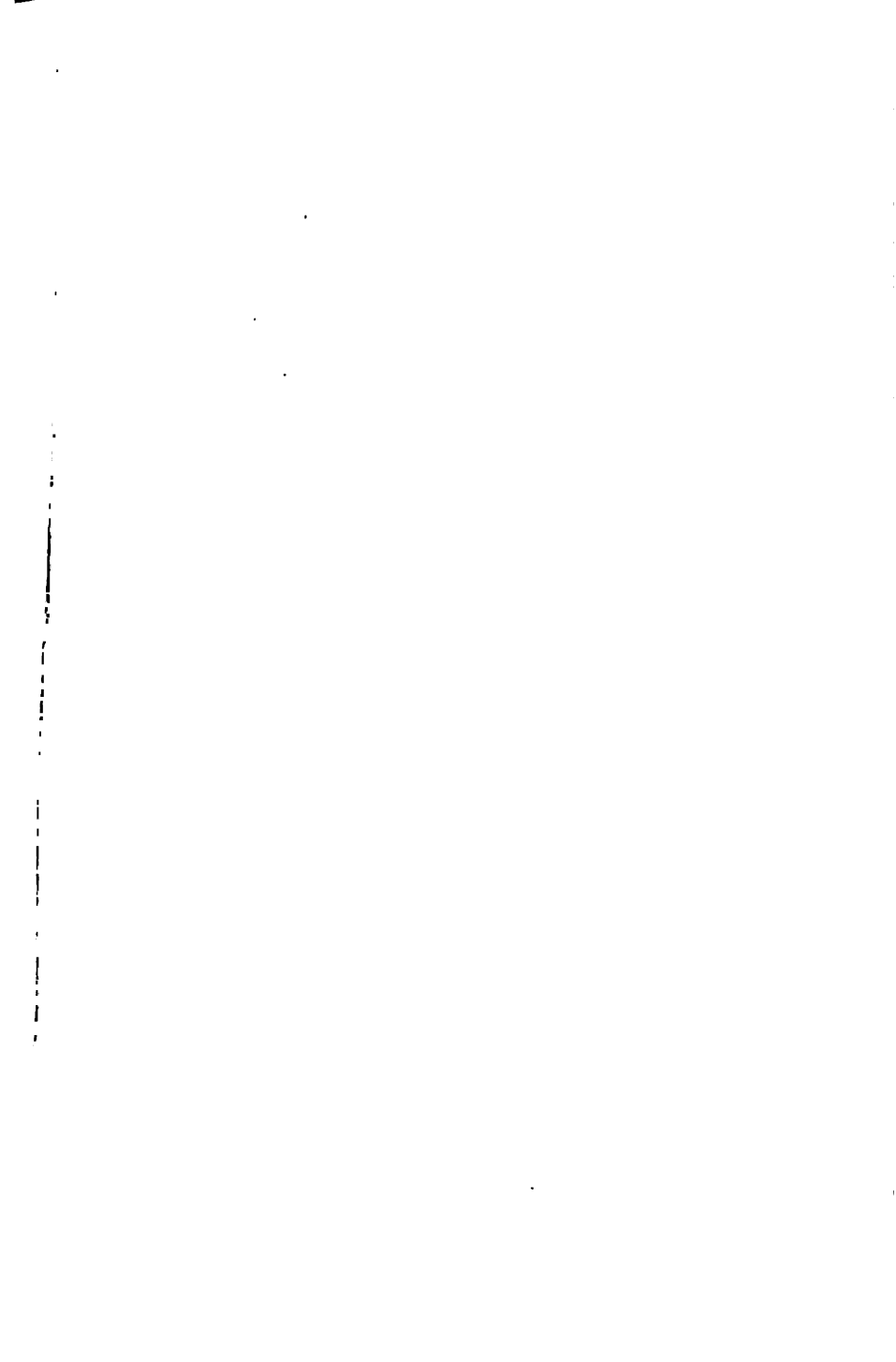












**14 DAY USE**  
**RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED**  
**LOAN DEPT.**

This book is due on the last date stamped below,  
or on the date to which renewed. Renewals only:  
Tel. No. 642-3405.  
Renewals may be made 4 days prior to date due.  
Renewed books are subject to immediate recall.

REC'D LD APR 28 71 -4 PM 42

JUN 16 1972

REC'D LD JUN 7 72 -1 PM 58

AUG 10 1980

REC. CIR. AUG 01 '80

Due end of  
subject to  
**RE**

LD 21A-60m  
(G4427s10)

LD21A-50m-2, '71  
(P2001s10)476-A-32

General Library  
University of California  
Berkeley

General Library  
University of California  
Berkeley

U. C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES



C046762449

105627

BL

80

67

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY

